



Cooling and freezing food

Goal: Ensure cooked food is safely cooled or frozen.

What can go wrong?	What can I do?	How can I check?	What if it is not right?
Growth of food poisoning bacteria	<p>Reduce the temperature of cooked food to below 5°C as quickly as possible after cooking.</p> <p>Within two hours, place cooked food in cold storage.</p> <p>(A longer initial cooling time may be required for large whole meat joints – more than 2.5kg – to ensure that they do not increase the temperature of the cold storage unit when refrigerated).</p> <p>Cool high-risk food from 60°C to 21°C within two hours. Once food has cooled to 21°C, put it in the refrigerator or freezer and cool to 5°C or colder within the next four hours.</p> <p>When food stops giving off steam it can be placed in cold storage.</p>	<p>Use a clean and sanitised probe thermometer to check the temperature at the centre of food.</p> <p>Use it every hour or so to measure the drop in temperature over time.</p>	<p>If food is above 21°C after two hours place on top of an ice tray.</p> <p>Where possible, reduce the volume of the food to assist with faster cooling. Monitor the temperature drop and ensure safe handling.</p> <p>Throw away high-risk food if the cooling time from 60°C to 21°C exceeds two hours, or exceeds four hours to 5°C.</p> <p>Improve cooling procedures and facilities.</p>
Cross-contamination of cooked food with food poisoning bacteria from raw food or other non-food contaminants or allergenic materials	<p>Cool food in clean food grade containers in an area away from raw food or other sources of contamination.</p> <p>Place food over an ice tray to cool and protect from contamination.</p> <p>Food handlers must follow good standards of personal hygiene in order to avoid contamination – especially if food has to be handled while still warm.</p>	<p>Check that cooling food is not at risk of contamination.</p>	<p>Throw out any cooled food if you suspect it has been contaminated.</p> <p>If non-allergenic food may be contaminated with an allergen, make sure that it is not used in the preparation of food that is intended to be allergen free.</p> <p>If food may include allergens, follow the instructions on pages 47 and 48 about making information available to customers and staff.</p>

