

Safe method:

Cooking and reheating safely

Thorough cooking kills harmful bacteria. It is also very important to reheat food properly to kill harmful bacteria that may have grown since the food was cooked.



Safety point

If a food has manufacturer's cooking instructions, follow these. Always check that food is very hot (steaming) all the way through. You can also use the following checks to make sure that food is properly cooked or reheated.

Why?

The manufacturer has tried and tested safe cooking methods specifically for its products.

Types of check



Check that food you are cooking or reheating is very hot (steaming) all the way through. Check the centre of dishes such as shepherd's pie or lasagne.

Types of food

Circle the types of food you use this check for and add any others.

Types of food: stew, curry, soup, gravy, pasta dishes, fish, rice, pies and pasties, fish fingers, pizzas, stir fries.

Other foods:



Check that pieces of chicken are very hot (steaming) in the middle. The meat should not be pink or red and the juices should not have any pink or red in them.

If you are cooking a whole chicken, check the meat in the thickest part of the leg.

Types of food: chicken drumstick and leg, chicken curry, chicken nuggets.

Other foods:

Check that pork and processed meat products, such as sausages and burgers, are very hot (steaming) all the way through with no pink or red in the centre.



Types of food: burgers, sausages, meatballs, pork chops, gammon.

Other foods:

Check that all the outside surfaces of meat are fully cooked.



Types of food: lamb chops, lamb cutlets, steak.

Other foods:

Safety point

Eggs

Do not serve raw eggs or make foods with raw or partially cooked eggs (e.g. home-made mayonnaise, mousse or ice cream) because these can contain harmful bacteria. Do not let children taste cake mixture containing raw eggs.

Avoid giving eggs with runny yolks to babies and toddlers.

For other egg dishes and foods containing eggs e.g. scrambled eggs, omelettes and quiche, check they are very hot (steaming) all the way through.



Do not use eggs after the 'best before' date. After this date there is a greater chance of harmful bacteria growing in the eggs. Ideally keep eggs in the fridge.

Rice

When you have cooked rice, make sure you keep it hot until it is eaten or cool it down as quickly as possible (ideally within one hour) and then keep it in the fridge. Use cooked rice within 24 hours and reheat it until very hot (steaming).

Rice can contain spores from a type of harmful bacteria. If cooked rice is left at room temperature, the bacteria could start growing again from the spores. These bacteria will multiply and may produce toxins (poisons) that cause food poisoning. Reheating will not get rid of these.

How do you do this?

Do you cook egg dishes and foods containing eggs thoroughly until they are very hot (steaming)?

Yes No

If not, what do you do?

Do you either keep rice hot or cool it down as quickly as possible and keep it in the fridge?

Yes No

If not, what do you do?

Think twice!

Reheating

Remember, reheating means cooking again, not just warming up. To make sure that cooked or reheated food is safe to eat, always check it is very hot (steaming) all the way through and then, if you need to, let it cool a little before serving it to a child. You should only reheat food once.

If you are reheating food in a microwave, follow the product manufacturer's instructions, if you have them, including advice on standing and stirring. Standing and stirring are part of the process of cooking/reheating in a microwave and help to make sure that food is the same temperature all the way through.

If you use a microwave to reheat food that you, or a parent/carer have cooked, it is a good idea to stir it while reheating. When food is microwaved, it can be very hot at the edges and still be cold in the centre – stirring helps to prevent this.

What to do if things go wrong

- If food is not properly cooked or reheated, cook it for longer.
- Speed up the cooking process, for example by dividing the food into smaller quantities, or using different equipment.
- Check that your oven/hob/microwave is working properly.

 **Write down what went wrong and what you did about it on your action sheet.** 

Safe method completed: Date: _____ Signature: _____