

Food Storage Chart

This chart has information about keeping foods safely in the refrigerator or freezer. It does not include foods that can be stored safely in the cupboard or on the shelves where quality may be more of an issue than safety. Remember this is a guide and you should always follow any “best before” dates that are on the product.

FOOD	IN REFRIGERATOR	IN FREEZER
Eggs		
Fresh, in shell	3 weeks	Don't freeze
Raw yolks, whites	2-4 days	1 year
Hard-cooked (boiled)	1 week	Don't freeze
Liquid pasteurized eggs or egg substitutes, opened	3 days	Don't freeze
Liquid pasteurized eggs or egg substitutes, unopened	10 days	1 year
Mayonnaise		
Commercial, refrigerate after opening	2 months	Don't freeze
TV Dinners, Frozen Casseroles		
Keep frozen until ready to heat and serve		3-4 months
Deli and Vacuum-Packed Products		
Store-prepared or homemade egg, chicken, tuna, ham, macaroni salads	3-4 days	Don't freeze
Pre-stuffed pork and lamb chops, stuffed chicken breasts	1 day	Don't freeze
Store-cooked convenience meals	1-2 days	Don't freeze
Commercial brand vacuum-packed dinners with USDA seal	2 weeks, unopened	Don't freeze
Hamburger, Ground, and Stew Meats (Raw)		
Hamburger and stew meats	1-2 days	3-4 months
Ground turkey, chicken, veal pork, lamb, and mixtures of them	1-2 days	3-4 months
Hotdogs and Lunch Meats*		
Hotdogs, opened package	1 week	
Hotdogs, unopened package	2 weeks	In freezer wrap, 1-2 months
Lunch Meats, opened	3-5 days	
Lunch Meats, unopened	2 weeks	In freezer wrap, 1-2 months
Deli sliced ham, turkey, lunch meats	2-3 days	1-2 months



Bacon and Sausage		
Bacon	1 week	1 month
Sausage, raw from pork, beef, turkey	1-2 days	1-2 months
Smoked breakfast links or patties	1 week	1-2 months
Hard Sausage-Pepperoni, Jerky Sticks	2-3 weeks	1-2 months
FOOD	IN REFRIGERATOR	IN FREEZER
Ham		
Canned, unopened, label says keep refrigerated	6-9 months	Don't freeze
Fully cooked - whole	7 days	1-2 months
Fully cooked - half	3-5 days	1-2 months
Fully cooked - slices	3-4 days	1-2 months
Fresh Meat		
Steaks, beef	3-5 days	6-12 months
Chops, pork	3-5 days	4-6 months
Chops, lamb	3-5 days	6-9 months
Roasts, beef	3-5 days	6-12 months
Roasts, lamb	3-5 days	6-9 months
Roasts, pork and veal	3-5 days	4-6 months
Fresh Poultry		
Chicken or turkey, whole	1-2 days	1 year
Chicken or turkey pieces	1-2 days	9 months
Giblets	1-2 days	3-4 months
Fresh Seafood		
Fish and shellfish	2 days	2-4 months
*Uncooked salami is not recommended because recent studies have found that the processing does not always kill the <i>E. coli</i> bacteria. Look for the label to say "Fully Cooked."		

Graves, D.E., Suitor, C.W. & Holt, K.A. (eds) *Making Food Healthy and Safe for Children: How to Meet the National Health and Safety Performance Standards Guidelines for Out of Home Child Care Programs*. Arlington, VA: National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health; 1997.