

CLEAN and SANITIZE

Keep everything clean.

This means clean hands, utensils, and food preparation surfaces as well as lunch boxes and lunch packs.

- Before preparing food, wash hands thoroughly in warm soapy water. Lather and scrub hands for at least 15 seconds.
- Make sure all containers, cutting boards and utensils are cleaned with warm soapy water, rinsed thoroughly and sanitized after each use.
- Prepare sandwiches on a clean plate or sanitized cutting board.
- Rinse fruits and vegetables well in running water. Use a scrub brush whenever possible. Dry thoroughly before packing.
- If packing canned products, wash the top lid to ensure it is clean.
- Teach your child to wash their hands thoroughly before eating at school.

HOW TO SANITIZE: Wash dishes and utensils well in hot, soapy water. Rinse well. Then soak them in a **sanitizing solution** of 10 mL (2 tsp) of liquid household chlorine bleach mixed with 1L (4 cups) of water for 45 seconds. Spray the solution on counters and cutting boards and let stand for at least 1 minute. Let all articles air dry (or use disposable towels).

OTHER RESOURCES

- Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care
www.health.gov.on.ca
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency
www.inspection.gc.ca
- Consumer Food Safety Education
www.canfightbac.org

PREVENTING FOODBORNE ILLNESS Pack a FOOD SAFE Lunch

Public health experts estimate that there are 11 to 13 million cases of foodborne illness in Canada every year. Following a few simple food safety rules when packing lunches – and teaching your children to do the same – can help prevent unwanted foodborne illness. Packing a lunch that will be safe when your child eats it, is just as important as packing healthy, nutritious foods.

Bacteria that cause foodborne illness multiply rapidly in The Danger Zone. Yet, packed lunches are often kept 4 - 6 hours at room temperature which falls within The Danger Zone. In as little as 2 hours, hazardous foods kept at room temperature can grow enough bacteria to make a person sick.

Keep Hazardous Foods out of The Danger Zone.

THE DANGER ZONE (4°C - 60°C)

Hazardous food left in the Danger Zone for more than 2 hours MUST BE THROWN OUT.



*Northwestern
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These foods are safe at room temperature.

Some foods are safe at room temperature and easy to pack. These include:

- Nuts and peanut butter
- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Dried fruits and trail mix
- Dry and hard cheese
- Dry, processed meats such as jerky and pepperoni (but NOT bologna or hot dogs)
- Packaged puddings
- Jam, honey and fruit pies
- Crackers, cakes or cookies

Keep hot foods hot.

Many foods, like pizza or chili, can be served either hot or cold. If you decide to serve it hot, use an insulated container.

- Preheat the insulated container by filling it with boiling water. Let stand for a few minutes.
- Empty and fill container with piping hot food (food that has been cooked and/or reheated to a temperature of at least 74° C).
- Instruct your child to keep the container closed until lunch time.
- If food is to be heated in a microwave, be sure it is kept cold until time to reheat it. Use only microwave-safe containers. Rotate the food to ensure food is evenly heated and thoroughly cooked.

WHEN THE LUNCH BOX OR PACK RETURNS HOME...

Wash your child's lunch box or bag – inside and out – with hot, soapy water to prevent the growth of harmful disease-causing organisms and cross-contamination. Wash the ice packs and gel packs before refreezing them. Throw away any hazardous foods not eaten that day.

Keep cold foods COLD.

Hazardous foods are not safe for school lunches unless they can be kept cold. These include:

- Meat, poultry and eggs
- Soups, salads and sandwiches containing hazardous foods
- processed meats (hot dogs, salami, bologna)
- tofu, soy products and meat substitutes
- milk, yogurt, cheese
- custards and puddings
- cooked pasta, rice and other cooked grains or cereals
- gravy, sauces, mayonnaise, butter
- combinations of these food items

WHAT ARE HAZARDOUS FOODS?

Hazardous foods are those able to support the growth of harmful disease-causing organisms or the production of toxins which cause foodborne illness. Cereals, dried foods and most fruits and vegetables are considered to be non-hazardous.

TIPS FOR KEEPING COLD FOODS COLD

- ➔ Keep foods cold by using insulated lunch bags or boxes which include frozen re-usable ice bricks and gel packs or frozen juice boxes. If using paper bags, layer them to help insulate the food.
- ➔ Keep sandwiches refrigerated until packing to go, or freeze them the night before.
- ➔ Explain to your child that lunches must be kept out of direct sunlight at school and away from radiators, baseboard heaters or heat vents in the classroom.
- ➔ If your child's school has a refrigerator for lunches, use it.