

food MATTERS

No. 19

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NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE • SPRING 2017

Keeping Your Customers Safe by Cooling Food Properly

Did you know that improper cooling can lead to foodborne illness, with symptoms like diarrhea, cramps, vomiting and fever? When food stays too long in the temperature danger zone – 41°F (60°C) to 140°F (21.1°C) – harmful bacteria begin to grow and multiply. To protect your customers from foodborne illness, food must pass through the temperature danger zone quickly: it must be cooled from 140°F to 70°F in two hours AND from 70°F to 41°F within an additional four hours.

There are several reasons why food may not cool quickly enough, including:

- Large portions: large amounts of food take longer to cool than smaller amounts of food

- Dense portions: a thick cut of meat or a deep pan of lasagna will take longer to cool than a small container of broth
- Deep containers: deep pans of food take longer to cool than shallow pans of food

To cool food quickly, place food containers in an ice bath or a rapid chill unit, or add ice to the food.

In addition, try one or more of the following methods:

- Place food in shallow pans or containers (less than 4 inches in height).
- Divide food into smaller or thinner pieces or portions.
- Use containers made of materials that transfer heat more quickly (like metal).

- Stir food regularly.
- Arrange containers in cooling equipment so they are not stacked.
- Keep containers loosely covered (or uncovered if protected from overhead contamination).

Monitor the cooling process by taking food temperatures and recording them in a cooling log.

By making sure that food is properly cooled, you are protecting your customers from foodborne illness.

For more information, see **Article 81, section 9(e)** at nyc.gov/healthcode.



Enforcement of Written Consumer Advisory Rule to Begin in January 2018

The written consumer advisory requirement took effect in January 2016, but the Health Department will not begin enforcing it until January 2018. This grace period will give restaurants time to implement the rule, which requires that a restaurant serving raw or undercooked eggs, meat, fish or other potentially hazardous foods include the following statement on menus, menu boards, brochures, signage, table tents and/or placards:

Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish or eggs may increase your risk of foodborne illness.

Either an asterisk (*) must be placed next to each affected menu item or a written description that identifies the item as being raw or undercooked must be included, e.g., “raw-egg Caesar salad dressing.”

This written advisory is required even if the menu item is listed as “cooked to order.” It is also required for specials that include raw or undercooked food.



Once the Health Department starts enforcing this rule, a restaurant that is not in compliance may receive a notice of violation, which may result in a \$300 fine. The violation will also affect the restaurant’s inspection score.

For more information, see Article 81, section 11(a) at nyc.gov/healthcode.

Campylobacter Outbreak at Manhattan Restaurant

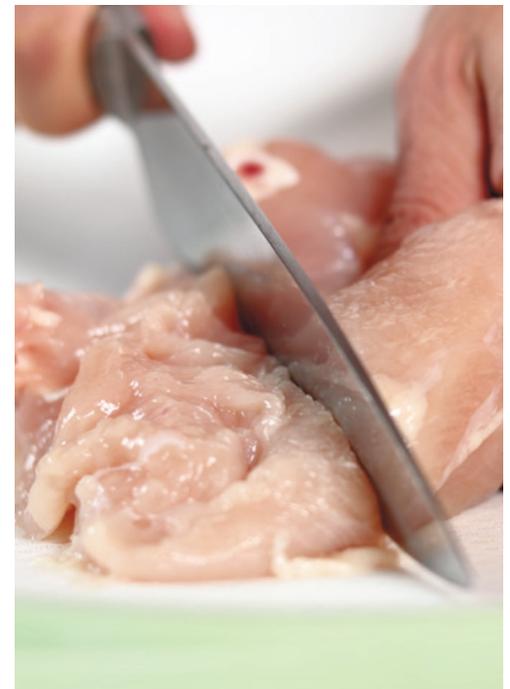
Each year, Health Department inspectors and doctors respond to complaints by diners who believe they became sick after eating in a restaurant. These investigations—which include an inspection of the restaurant and interviews with staff and customers—often uncover poor food safety practices.

In response to complaints of illness from 10 people who had all dined at a Manhattan restaurant, the Health Department conducted an investigation. When interviewed, the patrons indicated that they had become ill after eating chicken prepared at the restaurant. The

restaurant’s chef had recommended that the chicken be served rare to medium-rare, a very risky practice given that raw chicken is known to be contaminated with *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* bacteria. In this case, *Campylobacter* was found in the chicken. A *Campylobacter* infection can cause diarrhea, cramping, fever and vomiting, and generally lasts about one week.

When a restaurant complies with New York City’s Health Code, it helps prevent food-borne illness. To prevent a *Campylobacter* outbreak:

- Cook chicken to an internal temperature of 165°F.



- If the chicken is to be cooled and stored for later consumption, cool the chicken properly and hold at or below 41°F.

New “Dining with Dogs” Rule

Food service establishments can now allow dogs in certain outdoor dining areas. This is an option, not a requirement. If you choose to allow pet dogs in your restaurant’s outdoor dining areas, you must:

- Post a sign at the entrance of the outdoor dining area. The sign must state the following in English:

Companion dogs are only allowed in certain outdoor dining area(s) of this establishment.

Only service dogs are allowed in other parts of this establishment.

Your companion dog must be licensed and currently vaccinated against rabies to remain in the outdoor dining area with you.

You are responsible for controlling your dog at all times.



- Make sure that dogs can enter the outdoor dining area directly from the sidewalk.
- Place barriers to limit contact between dogs in your outdoor dining area and passersby and their dogs on the sidewalk.
- Prepare all food and store utensils indoors.
- Make sure that dog owners control their dogs.
- Make sure that dogs stay on the ground (not on seating) and out of the aisles.

- If providing food or water to dogs, use single-use, disposable containers.
- Make sure that staff do not pet or touch the dogs. If they do, they must wash their hands immediately with soap and water.
- Ask customers to remove dogs if they are threatening or aggressive. If a dog bites or hurts someone in your outdoor dining area, call 911 right away.
- Instruct staff who do not prepare or serve food to clean up after dogs – including urine, feces and vomit – and sanitize the areas right away.

The “Dining with Dogs” rule does not apply to service dogs, which can accompany their owners to all areas of the restaurant open to customers.

For more information about the “Dining with Dogs” rule, visit nyc.gov/health/animals.

New Sodium Warning Rule: What Food Service Establishments Need to Know

The new sodium (salt) rule requires that chain food service establishments place a warning icon (⚠) next to food items containing more than 2,300 mg of sodium, the recommended daily sodium limit. The ⚠ should be placed next to the affected food items on menus, menu boards and item tags. Food service establishments must also post this statement: **“Warning: ⚠ indicates that the sodium (salt) content of this**

item is higher than the total daily recommended limit (2,300 mg). High sodium intake can increase blood pressure and risk of heart disease and stroke.”

This rule applies to all food service establishments that require a Health Department permit and are part of a chain (15 or more locations nationwide).



For more information, visit nyc.gov/health/salt or call 311 and ask about the sodium warning rule. Health inspectors are also available to answer questions during inspections.



Food Safety Challenge

1. Which of the following is not an acceptable method for cooling a 5-gallon container of beef stew?

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|---|---|
| A. Pouring it in a shallow container and refrigerating it | C. Placing it in an ice-water bath |
| B. Cooling it with a rapid chill/blast chiller unit | D. Placing it in a walk-in refrigerator |

2. Which of the following bacteria is commonly associated with raw chicken?

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| A. Bacillus cereus | C. Salmonella enteritidis |
| B. Clostridium perfringens | D. Hepatitis A |

3. The purpose of refrigerating potentially hazardous foods is to:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| A. Kill all bacteria | C. Improve taste |
| B. Slow the growth of bacteria | D. Improve appearance |

4. When cooling food, the temperature must be reduced from 140°F to 70°F within:

- | | |
|------------|------------|
| A. 2 hours | C. 6 hours |
| B. 4 hours | D. 8 hours |

5. When making tuna salad from ingredients at room temperature, it must be cooled within:

- | | |
|------------|------------|
| A. 2 hours | C. 6 hours |
| B. 4 hours | D. 8 hours |



Did You Know?

1) Renewing your permit online is easy. Go to nyc.gov/dohmhpermits. Registration is required. Payment is by credit or debit card only.

2) Interested in resources the City offers to businesses? Go to nyc.gov/business.

3) Settle a food service establishment violation. If you receive an offer of settlement, you may save money by accepting it. [Visit on nyc.gov/HealthSettlements](https://www.nyc.gov/HealthSettlements).

4) Your establishment will get fewer violations if more of your staff learn food safety practices. For more information about the food protection course, go to nyc.gov/healthacademy.

5) Need information about opening and operating a food service establishment in New York City? [Visit nyc.gov/health/foodservice](https://nyc.gov/health/foodservice).