



Food Safety When Organising a Party

It is not unusual to hear of guests at private parties being taken ill with food poisoning following a local social event.

Usually food prepared in the home had been taken somewhere else to be eaten, such as the community centre or social club where the function was held.

Food poisoning is a miserable experience and can be a potentially dangerous experience. It is **YOUR** responsibility to ensure that your food does not make the guests ill, and to take extra care with people coming to the function who may be especially vulnerable, for example young children, pregnant women and the elderly.

WHICH FOODS TO TAKE SPECIAL CARE OVER

Many foods can be a source of food poisoning including raw poultry, raw eggs, meat and meat products, fish and shellfish, sauces and desserts, vegetables, raw salads and dressings that may be contaminated or become contaminated.

The common faults resulting in contamination of food are –

- Poor storage
- Cross contamination
- Inadequate cooking
- Cold foods not kept cold (less than 2°C)
- Hot foods not kept hot (higher than 63°C)

SUITABLE STORAGE OF FOOD

Large functions mean large quantities of both cooked and uncooked food.

Both the raw and cooked food will compete for the refrigeration storage space available in your home, and this can result in food being left un-refrigerated for long periods of time.

DOMESTIC FRIDGES are not designed to cope with large amounts of food prepared for parties.

CONTAMINATION

To reduce the risk of contamination of the food being prepared in the home, ensure that -

- prior to catering for a large function, there will be adequate refrigeration / freezer space both in the home and at the site of the function, to keep food stored at below 2°C:
- persons involved in the preparation of the food are aware of, and practice, the basics of good food hygiene:
- raw meats are stored on the bottom of the fridge:
- cooked foods are stored above all raw product:
- alcohol and cold drinks are stored separate from foods:
- all pets are kept out of the kitchen:
- separate utensils used for the preparation of raw and cooked products:
- all working tops are washed, using hot water and detergent, before starting and between use:
- food preparation persons thoroughly wash hands
 1. before handling any food:
 2. after the using the toilet:
 3. or use of a handkerchief,
 4. touching a rubbish bin:
 5. touching dirty clothes.

It is important that persons engaged in the preparation and handling of food, have access to, and use, wash hand facilities provided with running hot and cold water, soap and clean disposable towels.

- Change tea towels frequently:
- Ensure all cuts and grazes are covered with a waterproof dressing, wear a suitable finger stall or glove, (ensure dressing is still there at the end of the food preparation time):
- Thoroughly wash all fresh produce:

COOKING OF FOOD

- **ensure that all meat product and poultry is fully thawed before cooking, use either the fridge or microwave for thawing:**
- **cook all food thoroughly:**
- **ensure the centre temperature of the cooked food reaches at least 72°C for two minutes:**
- **prepare as much food as possible immediately prior to the function, do not make foods too far in advance:**
- **do not reheat cooked food more than once, ensuring that the food is hot (greater than 72°C):**
- **throw away any food that has been standing at room temperature during the function:**
- **left overs should be stored in clean, sealed containers in the fridge and not kept any longer than 24 hours:**
- **before eating left overs ensure they are heated to greater than 72°C at the centre:**

TEMPERATURE CONTROL

- **The refrigerator should operate between 0°C and 4°C:**
- **Don't overload the fridge:**
- **Open the fridge as little as possible:**
- **Cooked foods should be cooled as quickly as possible:**
- **Place hot foods in shallow trays and seal, and place in a cool spot prior to placing them in fridge:**
- **Limit the size of the product being cooked, as smaller sized portions of cooked products will cool quicker:**
- **Do not place hot food in the refrigerator, as this will raise the temperature of the fridge:**
- **Cover all foods stored in the refrigerator:**
- **Transport all products in sealed containers, preferably chilly bins containing frozen slicker pads:**

SERVING OF FOOD

Ensure all food is covered until food service begins:

Place food out on the tables as late as possible:

Provide tongs, spoons, spatulas etc for serving of food:

Ensure all crockery used in the serving and eating of food is sterilised prior to use.

If liquor is to be sold a special liquor licence will be required.

Council approval is required if food is sold at, or there is an entry charge to, the function, or if the catering is by a non-profit organisation.

PARTIES MEAN **BIG RESPONSIBILITIES** –

**DON'T TAKE CHANCES WITH PEOPLES HEALTH,
AND PLAN CAREFULLY**

IF YOU CAN'T DO IT SAFELY, DON'T DO IT AT ALL

FOR FURTHER ADVICE CONTACT –

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