

# Cooling Food Properly

## *Why are we concerned about cooling food properly?*

When cooked food is stored and cooled improperly, bacteria can start to grow and survive at cold temperatures. Cooling properly helps ensure food safety which prevents illness and helps keep people healthy.

## *How to Cool Food Properly using the Two Stage Cooling Process:*

- Divide large portions - Split soups, stews, or casseroles into shallow containers so they cool faster.
- Use shallow containers -Food should be no more than 2 inches deep when cooling.
- Stir and uncover - Stir occasionally to release heat and leave uncovered until the food stops steaming.
- Use an ice wand - This will help to cool large quantities of soup and other foods from the inside of the food product out.
- Use an ice bath -Place the pot or container in a larger bowl of ice water and stir to bring the temperature down quickly.
- Put in the refrigerator or freezer to drop the temperature quickly.
- Take temperatures: of cooling food and start timer when the food reaches 135° F, write down the time, use several of the above methods together for the best results on how to cool the food. Ensure food is at 70°F within a maximum of 2 hours. Write down the time when 70° F was achieved then after a maximum of 4 more hours ensure the cooled food reached 41F.



**For more information see:** [www.cdc.gov/food-safety/prevention/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/food-safety/prevention/index.html)



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