

◆◆◆ Food Safety ◆◆◆

HELPFUL HINTS FROM EXPERTS

How To Give Bacteria The Cold Shoulder

(NAPSA)—Experts agree that proper refrigeration at 40° F or below is one of the most effective ways to reduce the risk of foodborne illness. “Microorganisms grow more rapidly at warmer temperatures, and research shows that maintaining a constant refrigerator temperature of 40° F or below helps slow growth of these harmful microbes,” said Shelley Feist, Executive Director of the Partnership for Food Safety Education.

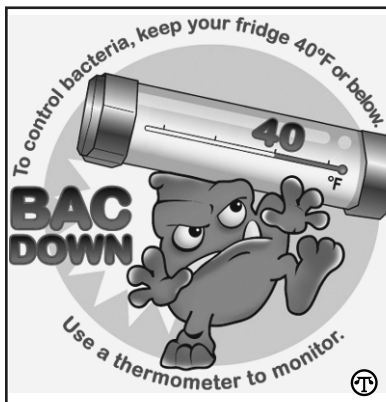
Use a refrigerator thermometer, a separate tool that displays the actual temperature. Other ways to reduce the risk of foodborne illness:

Clean: Wash hands and surfaces often. Spend at least 20 seconds washing hands with warm water and soap before and after preparing food. Also, always thoroughly clean kitchen appliances, utensils and countertops used for preparing food.

Separate: Cross-contamination spreads bacteria from one food to another and from unclean hands and surfaces to food. Keep raw meat, poultry and seafood and their juices away from ready-to-eat foods.

Cook: To kill harmful bacteria that cause foodborne illness, cook foods to the proper temperature. Always use a food thermometer to check the internal temperature. You can find a chart of proper internal temperatures online at fightbac.org.

Chill: Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared foods and left-



It's a cool idea, for safety's sake, to keep the temperature in your fridge at 40° F or below.

overs within two hours of purchase or use. Marinate foods in the refrigerator. Keep the freezer unit at 0° F. Check these temperatures with an appliance thermometer.

The Partnership for Food Safety Education, a nonprofit organization uniting industry associations, consumer and public health groups and several government agencies, is the creator and steward of a food-safety education program called the FightBAC! campaign, developed using scientifically based recommendations and resulting from an extensive consumer research process.

To become a BAC Fighter! and join in the effort to help prevent foodborne illness in your home and community visit www.fightbac.org. For additional “cool rules” to keep your foods safe, click on BAC Down.