

# Using Leftovers Safely

Good nutrition is important at any age



Leftovers help avoid food waste, save money, and make quick future meals. **Store and reuse leftovers properly to prevent foodborne illness.**

## STORE LEFTOVERS

Put large batches of food in the fridge to eat over the next few days, and freeze the rest. **Store leftovers within 2 hours of cooling.**

**Food safety tips to use when storing leftovers:**

### 1 To cool your leftovers:

- Divide the food into single servings for later use
- Wait for the food to stop steaming before putting it away

### 2 To store in the fridge (4°C | 40°F or lower):

- Put leftovers in covered containers (e.g., lids, aluminum foil)
- Label the type of food and the date you made it

### 3 To store in the freezer (-18°C | 0°F or lower):

- Put leftovers in containers that are made for the freezer, or wrap food in aluminum foil and place in re-sealable bags
- Label the type of food and the date you made it

## DEFROST AND REHEAT LEFTOVERS

There are many ways to **safely defrost and reheat** your leftovers.

**Food safety tips for defrosting and reheating leftovers:**

1

### To defrost your leftovers:

- Place on the bottom shelf of your fridge in a sealed container;
- Place in the microwave in a safe container; or
- Place in a sink with cold water, replacing water every 30 mins

2

### To reheat your leftovers:

- Cook food immediately after it is defrosted
- Reheat food to a safe internal temperature
- Discard uneaten leftovers after they have been reheated

**You cannot always tell if a food is spoiled by its appearance, smell, or taste. When in doubt, throw it out!**

## WAYS TO USE LEFTOVERS

Your leftovers can be used to make **new, exciting meals!**

### Ideas to help you use your leftovers:

- Add cooked vegetables to omelettes, sandwiches, or pastas
- Add chopped fruits to smoothies, yogurt, or salads
- Add cooked poultry to stir-fries, soups, casseroles, or salads
- Add ground meats to chilis, casseroles, or pastas
- Add cooked fish or shellfish to tacos, salads, or soups/chowders
- Add hard-boiled eggs to sandwiches or salads

Brought to you by the Nutrition & Aging Lab at the University of Waterloo.  
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