



Safe & Nutritious Food
A Shared Responsibility

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THE PINK BOOK

**YOUR GUIDE FOR
SAFE AND NUTRITIOUS
FOOD AT HOME**

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**SAFE AND NUTRITIOUS FOOD
A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY**



**YOUR GUIDE FOR
SAFE AND NUTRITIOUS FOOD AT HOME**

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For more information,
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Write to us at snfathome@fssai.gov.in
with your suggestions and queries

Preface

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is pleased to present to you 'The Pink Book: Your Guide for Safe and Nutritious Food at Home'. This book has been crafted specially for kitchens in Indian homes so that the food prepared is safe, hygienic and nutritious.

The book has eight sections namely, selecting and purchasing food, serving food, preparing and cooking food, healthy eating, packaging food and finally maintaining hygiene & sanitation. It provides useful tips, dos and don'ts, methods and practices that should be followed in Indian kitchens.

The book has been brought together by a team of food technologists and nutritionists from various premier institutions in the country. It has been carefully reviewed by experts.

The book introduces Master Sehat and Miss Sehat as mascots for safe and nutritious food, initiative of FSSAI. This is to ensure safe and nutritious food for all citizens everywhere at all times.

FSSAI would welcome any suggestions and feedback on this publication so that 'The Pink Book' becomes a trusted companion and part of all Indian households.

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Lucid Solutions

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**Meet Master and Miss Sehat
for
Safe and Nutritious**



SELECTING & PURCHASING FOOD

Healthy and safe eating begins with choosing what foods you buy.
So, let us start with buying food from the market.

DO'S AND DON'TS OF SELECTING AND PURCHASING FOOD ITEMS

FRUITS & VEGETABLES



DO...buy	DON'T....buy
Fresh, seasonal and locally available vegetables and fruits at the right stage of maturity	Overripe, blemished/darkened, bruised or insect infested vegetables and fruits
Green leafy vegetables that are crisp and fresh. The darker the colour, the better it is in terms of nutritional benefits	Green leafy vegetables with wilted or yellow leaves, mushy texture, unpleasant odour, slimy, fuzzy or mouldy growth
Fruits that are firm to touch, unblemished, fresh and clean. In case of citrus fruits, choose juicy and succulent ones, which are heavy for their size	Fruits that are pulpy, shrivelled and overripe/rotting
Roots and tubers that are firm to touch.	Roots and tubers that are shrivelled, soft/pulpy, green and sprouted

EGGS, MEAT, POULTRY & FISH

	DO...buy	DON'T....buy
 EGGS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eggs with shells that are clean and intact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eggs with shells that are dirty and discoloured, or soiled with droppings Eggs with cracked shells Eggs that float in water Broken eggs with blood spot/meat spot/foul odour
 FISH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fish with gills that are intact, bright and pink in colour Fish with clear eyes and flesh that bounces back when pressed with a finger 	Fish with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dull, sunken eyes Grey or green gills Foul odour Flabby flesh that separates from the bones Very few scales left on the flesh With flesh on which depression remains when pressed with a finger
 MEAT, POULTRY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meat that has pink flesh Lean meat with less cartilage and bone If purchasing pre-cut or packaged meat, check the temperature of the chilled storage unit Check that the 'Best before' date has not lapsed. 	Meat and poultry with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tough, fibrous flesh with more fat and bone Discolouration Putrid smell Slimy appearance and touch

MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS

DO...buy	DON'T....buy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pasteurised milk and milk products, as they are safer • Packaged and sealed milk or milk from authorised milk depots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unpasteurised milk • Milk that is discoloured, stringy, sour in taste or curdled, with unnatural odour • Loose milk and curd
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh cheese and cottage cheese or paneer, preferably packaged and sealed, if purchasing from the market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheese and cottage cheese or paneer that is slimy to touch, has creamy yellowish discolouration, or bad odour
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is preferable to prepare curd at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the packaging of the product is not sealed properly, or is puffed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If purchasing packaged curd, check the date of manufacture and ensure that 'best before' date has not lapsed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If 'expiry date' or 'best before' date on the packet has lapsed



FROZEN FOODS



DO...buy	DON'T....buy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy only packaged frozen foods and check that the date of expiry has not lapsed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large amounts of ice crystals, discolouration, off smell
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thaw only as much quantity as you need. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If packaging is soiled, leaking or damaged



TIP

While shopping, pick perishable foods (milk, fresh meat, fish or frozen packs) last to avoid spoilage.



FATS, OILS, OILSEEDS AND NUTS

DO...buy

- Preferably packaged fats, oils and ghee
- Preferably packaged oilseeds and nuts with packaging intact

DON'T....buy

- Oils sold loose, especially mustard oil
- Nuts and oilseeds/powders with rancid smell
- Insect infested/ mouldy groundnuts



PULSES AND CEREALS WHEAT FLOUR, RICE, SEMOLINA



DO...buy

- Preferably packaged and sealed grains
- Fortified wheat flour and rice
- Even sized and clean grains.

DON'T....buy

- Grains with:
- Clumps, musty or cottony growth,
 - Unpleasant odour
 - Stones, dirt
 - Insect infestation

PACKAGED, CANNED & BOTTLED FOODS



DO...buy

- Intact packets
- Sealed bottles
- Foods with uniform colour and consistency
- Check dates of manufacture and expiry

DON'T...buy

- Deflated packets (with less air), suspended impurities, dented, bulging, and leaking packets/ cans.
- Packets having contents with putrid smell, brine/ syrup, or which look cloudy/ bubbly or slimy.

CONDIMENTS AND SPICES

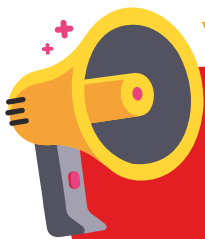


DO...buy

- Packaged, ground spices
- Intact packaging and contents when buying whole spices (chillies, cardamom)

DON'T...buy

- Spices and condiments with:
- Cottony growth
 - Unpleasant odour
 - Presence of insects and powder in whole spices, mould growth and artificial /bright colours
 - Clumps in ground spices



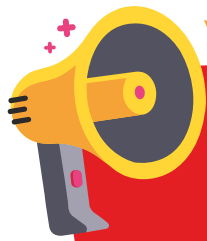
SNF ALERT!

If food is spoiled or looks doubtful, it is best to throw it away immediately and wash the container thoroughly. Never taste such doubtful food to test if it is spoiled. Eating even a small amount of spoiled food can cause harm.



READING AND UNDERSTANDING LABELS

Being able to understand and correctly interpret the labels on food items is vitally important to be able to make good food choices and prepare healthy food in your kitchen.



SNF ALERT!

Always check the date of manufacture and expiry or “Best Before” date for freshness.
Be sure to consume foods before the “Best Before” date or before the “Expiry Date” has lapsed.

LOOK FOR THESE LOGOS



FOR ALL PACKAGED
FOODS AND BEVERAGES



FOR PACKAGED DRINKING
WATER AND CERTAIN
PROCESSED FOODS



FOR ALL AGRICULTURAL
PRODUCTS



GREEN dot for
vegetarian food



MAROON dot for
non-vegetarian food,
including egg

DID YOU KNOW?

‘Fortified’ food means essential nutrients such as vitamins and minerals have been added to the food. Eating fortified wheat flour, rice, milk, oil, and salt helps to meet your daily requirement for nutrients that help you grow, fight infections and stay strong and healthy.

LOOK FOR THIS LOGO



FORTIFIED
SAMPOORNA POSHAN
SWASTH JEEVAN



फोर्टिफाइड
संपूर्ण पोषण
स्वस्थ जीवन

USING NUTRITION FACTS TO EAT HEALTHIER

SERVING SIZE and NET WEIGHT

- Check the serving size. It may be given as the number of servings per container/packet or the weight/volume in g/ml.
- Check the net weight of the packet. This is the total amount of product contained in the packet.
- The Nutrition Facts Label information is generally based on one serving/per 100g or 100ml, but many packages may contain more than one serving or more than 100g or 100ml.
- Look at how many servings/g/ml you are actually consuming. If there are two servings/200g/200ml in one packet and you eat the whole packet, you have consumed double the calories and nutrients mentioned in the Nutrition Facts.

CARBOHYDRATES

- Check for sugars, especially added sugars.
- Limit sugars, especially added sugars, to reduce your risk of obesity.

VITAMINS

- Select foods that are rich in a variety of vitamins as they help us fight infections and keep us healthy.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (228g)
Servings Per Container 2

Amount Per Serving		
Calories 250		Calories from Fat 110
		% Daily Value*
Total Fat	12g	18%
Saturated Fat	3g	15%
Trans Fat	3g	
Cholesterol	30mg	10%
Sodium	470mg	20%
Potassium	700mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate	31g	10%
Dietary Fiber	0g	0%
Sugars	5g	
Protein	5g	
Vitamin A		4%
Vitamin C		2%
Calcium		20%
Iron		4%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

ENERGY

- This is where you find the calories per serving, given in kcal, which stands for kilocalories.
- If the packet contains two servings and the calorie content is 100 calories per serving then you consume 200 calories if you eat the whole packet.
- Fat-free does not mean calorie-free. Lower fat items may have as many calories as full-fat items.

FATS, CHOLESTEROL and SODIUM

- To help reduce your risk of heart disease, use the label to select foods that are lowest in saturated fats, trans fats, and cholesterol.
- To help reduce your risk of high blood pressure, select foods which are lowest in sodium content.

PROTEIN

- Look for foods that are rich in proteins. Proteins are the building blocks of our body. They are found in muscles, bones, hair, skin and tissues and are important for the body to function properly.

DAILY VALUE% (DV%) and DIETARY FIBRE

- Some foods display Daily Value%. This tells you what percentage of the daily requirements of particular nutrients is fulfilled by that food.
- DV is based on a 2000-calorie diet. If a nutrient's DV is listed as 20% then it meets 20% of the total amount of that nutrient you need per day to function properly.
- This is a helpful way to check if the food is high or low in a nutrient value. A DV of 5% or less means the food item is low in that nutrient and 20% or more means it is high in that nutrient.

DIETARY FIBRE

- Check the amount of fibre. Fibre improves digestive functioning and overall health.

LIST OF INGREDIENTS and FOOD ADDITIVES:

- Carefully check the list of ingredients.
- Common allergy-causing ingredients include casein in milk, tree nuts including peanuts, eggs, fish, shellfish, soybean, and gluten in wheat. Avoid food products that include these ingredients if the consumer is sensitive to them. Consuming these in even small quantities can cause allergic reactions.
- Check the food additives for artificial/permitted flavouring and colours. Class I preservatives are preferred over class II.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE:

- Read instructions for use if mentioned.
- Make sure you follow these instructions for the best results.

CLAIMS & CLARIFICATIONS

Food advertisements can sometimes make claims that require clarifications so that you can make healthy choices.



Food	Claim	Clarification
Fats/Oils	“This oil is good for diabetes” or other diseases or “this oil is heart friendly”.	All oils are 100% fat, and therefore, should be consumed in recommended quantities only.
	“This oil does not contain cholesterol”	No plant- based oil contains cholesterol anyway.
	“Light oil”	Some oils are more easily absorbed than others but 1 gm of any oil will give the same amount of energy, i.e., 9 kcal.
	“This oil contains no saturated fats”	This is not true because every kind of oil has some percentage of saturated fats, even though some oils contain more saturated fats than others.
	“Cholesterol free” label	Products marked ‘cholesterol free’ do not contain cholesterol but care has to be taken to check for total fats, especially saturated and trans fats, as they can increase cholesterol levels in the body. Our body synthesizes cholesterol. Also, vegetable oils do not contain cholesterol; only animal fats do.
	“Low-fat” or “Non-fat” labels	Often low fat foods have extra sugar, refined flour or starch thickeners to make them taste better. These ingredients add calories from carbohydrates, which may lead to weight gain.
Cereals	Bread that is marked “Brown bread”	Brown bread need not mean whole wheat bread. Brown bread is often coloured with caramel colour and may have only a small percentage of wheat flour. To be genuinely labelled ‘whole wheat bread’, it must be at least 50% whole wheat.
Sugars	“Sugar-free” and “Brown sugar” labels	People often associate sugar free foods with lower calories, and thus, consider them beneficial for diabetics and weight watchers. Sugar free foods, however, may be loaded with fats, refined cereals (refined flour, starch) and even sugars in different forms (malitol, fructose, corn syrup, molasses) ‘Brown sugar’ is often sucrose, tinted with caramel colour.

MAKING HEALTHY CHOICES WHILE SELECTING AND BUYING FOOD

CEREALS AND PULSES

- Whole grains are high in dietary fibre, low in fat, and rich in vitamin E, iron, selenium, zinc, and B-complex vitamins.
- Buy whole grain cereals, legumes and pulses as they are rich in essential nutrients.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- Fruits and vegetables provide dietary fibre, folate, and vitamins such as vitamin C, vitamin A, some minerals, anti-oxidants, and water.
- Buy seasonal vegetables and fruits and choose a rainbow of colourful fruits and vegetables.
- When buying fruit juices, choose 100% juices without added sugar.

DID YOU KNOW?

Fish is rich in long-chain Omega-3 fatty acids. Frequent consumption of fish helps protect against several chronic diseases including heart disease and diabetes. Eat more oily fish like mackerel, which is both



DID YOU KNOW?

Vegetarian diets that include proteins from legumes, soy, low-fat dairy, nuts, seeds, whole grains and vegetables can easily meet your protein requirements.



MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS

- Milk is a very good source of high-quality protein, calcium, phosphorus, vitamin B2 and vitamin B12.
- Buy milk and a variety of milk products such as curd, cottage cheese/paneer, or cheese.
- Choose low fat milk and cheese to avoid the risk of cardio-vascular (heart) diseases.
- For the dairy or lactose intolerant: you can substitute dairy products with soy and soy products (tofu, miso, soy milk, etc).

MEAT, FISH, POULTRY & EGGS

- Meat, fish, poultry and eggs are rich sources of protein, iron, zinc, and B vitamins.
- Buy seasonal fish.
- Eggs provide good nutritional value for money.
- Choose lean cuts of meat if you're watching your weight.

OILS AND FATS

- Buy and use two or more different types of Fats-oils/ghee for daily cooking.
- To reduce risk of heart disease, replace saturated and trans fat found in ghee, vanaspati, palm oil etc. with monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats naturally found in fish, nuts, and vegetable oils.

DID YOU KNOW?

Soups and salads are not always low in calories. Soups with a lot of cream, starch, coconut, noodles etc. are rich in calories. Packaged soups also have high sodium, and thus, are not healthy. This is also true for salads with rich



STORING RAW FOOD

The next step, after buying food from the market, is storing it properly for future use. Always keep the following tips in mind while storing raw food and foodstuff.

CEREALS AND PULSES

- Store in large clean bins/containers, preferably placed above ground level.
- Keep a clean, dry scoop in every container.
- Containers should be air-tight.
- The place of storage should be dry/free from moisture.



SPICES AND CONDIMENTS

- Store in clean, labelled, air-tight jars.
- Store in a dry place.

VEGETABLES

- Pick, clean, and store green leafy vegetables in net/perforated bags (plastic bags with small holes to allow them to breathe).
- Store onions, garlic, and potatoes in open baskets to permit air circulation.
- Refrigerate carrots, radishes, beetroots, etc.
- Store tomatoes, brinjals, capsicums, lady's finger etc. in perforated bags in the refrigerator.





FRUITS

- You can store fruits like apples, pears, and oranges in a cool, dry place for a few days.
- Do not refrigerate bananas, as they will turn black.
- Store all other fruits in the refrigerator.

MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS

- You can store milk in the chiller shelf of the refrigerator for 1–5 days.
- Store milk powder at room temperature in an airtight container.
- Always refrigerate butter, cream, and cheese.



FATS AND OILS

- Store in cool, dark places.
- Store in jars/containers with well-fitting lids.
- Avoid storage near gas/stoves or sunlight.



CANNED & BOTTLED FOODS

- Store cans in cool, dark places, away from direct exposure to heat or UV rays.
- Store bottled foods in the refrigerator if specified on the label.
- Avoid deep freezing.





EGGS, MEAT, FISH, AND POULTRY

- Store eggs separately in the egg tray of the refrigerator.
- Store meat and poultry in the chiller if it is to be consumed within a day, or in the freezer if it needs to be stored longer.
- Keep raw and cooked meat separately.

CLEAN YOUR STORAGE CONTAINERS

- Wash containers with soap and clean water before refilling.
- Dry the washed containers thoroughly before storing food in them.
- Immediately discard any containers that are cracked, broken, or without lids.



USEFUL TIPS FOR STORAGE

- All food storage areas should be clean and ventilated.
- Non-food supplies (cleaning materials, chemicals, packing materials) must be stored away from food to prevent any accidental mixing, which might have serious consequences.
- Keep foods dry and away from moisture.
- Avoid storing food in non-food grade plastic containers — polymers are not inert!
- Separate raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs from other foods in your grocery shopping cart/ grocery bags, and refrigerate them as soon as you reach home.
- Wash and air dry/ wipe fruit and vegetables before storage, except green leafy vegetables, onions, potatoes, and garlic



STORING FOODS BY TEMPERATURE



Room Temperature

- Cereals and pulses
- Roots and tubers
- Bananas
- Spices and condiments

Cool Places

- Oils and fats
- Canned foods



Refrigerator

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Milk and milk products
- Meat, fish, eggs, poultry

Freezer

- Ice, ice-cream
 - Meat
- Frozen pre-cooked meals



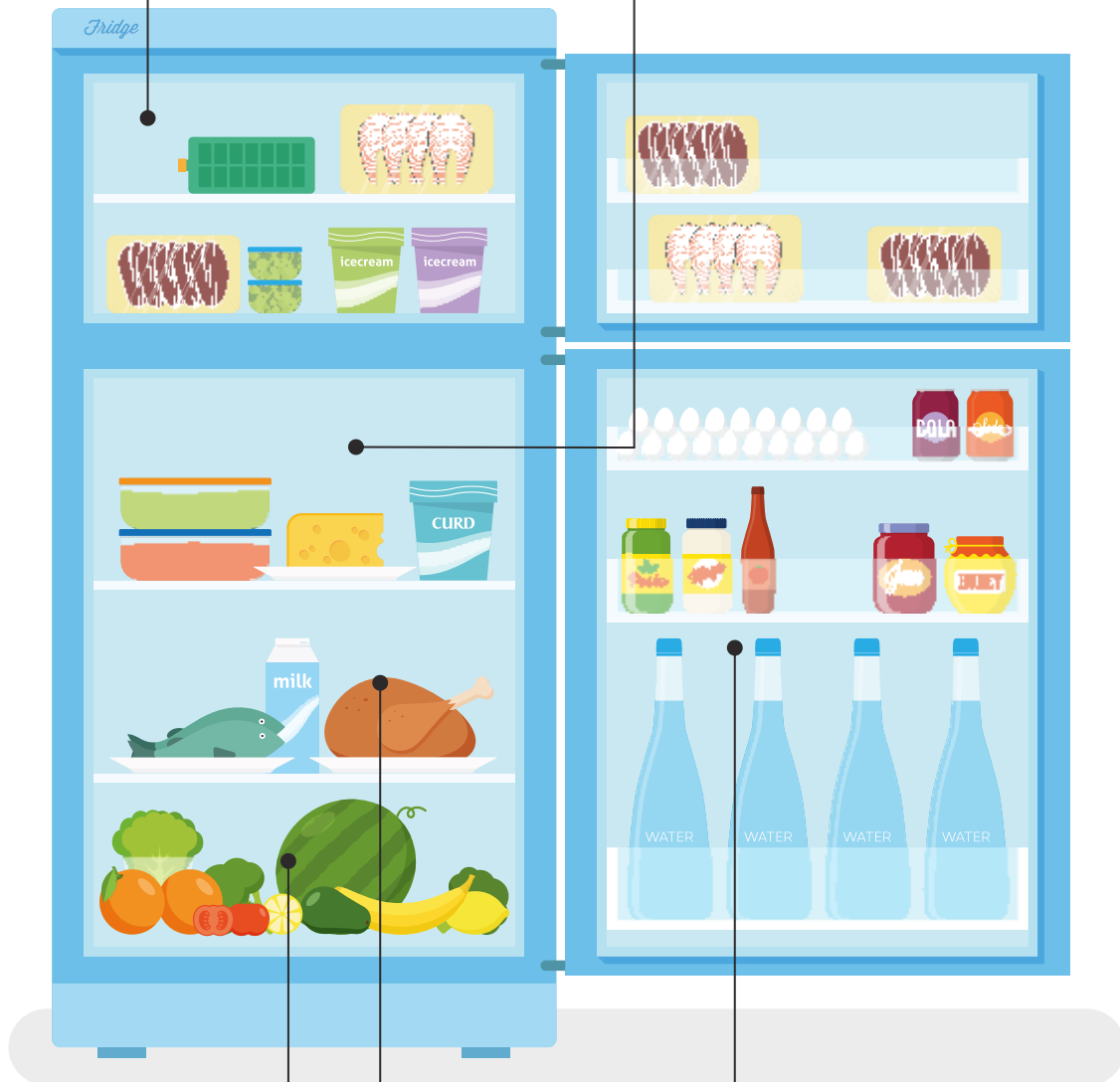
INSIDE YOUR FRIDGE

FREEZER

- Frozen foods: vegetables, meats
- Pre-cooked frozen meals from the market
- Ice creams
- Ice

TOP/ COLDEST SHELF

- Curd
- Butter
- Cheese
- Cooked food: leftovers



LOWER/ LEAST COLD SHELF

- Fruits
- Vegetables

MIDDLE/ LESS COLD SHELF

- Milk
- Meat
- Fish
- Poultry

REFRIGERATOR DOOR

- Water bottles
- Eggs in the egg tray
- Juices
- Condiments



REFRIGERATION TIPS

- The refrigeration unit should be placed in an airy and well-ventilated place, away from any source of heat.
- The refrigerator should be opened for the shortest possible time and the door should not be left open.
- Never store perishable foods in the refrigerator door.
- Store similar foods together.
- Do not store bread in the refrigerator.
- Place cooked food above and not below raw food in the refrigerator to prevent cross-contamination.
- Do not store milk and milk products below raw food, or foods with strong odour. Ensure that containers are tightly covered to prevent absorption of odour.
- Make sure that the foods to be stored for the longest time are stored in the coldest part of the refrigerator.
- Always cover food in the refrigerator and freezer to prevent it from drying and losing its texture.
- Aluminium foil and cling film are useful for covering food while storing. However, wrap food in aluminium foil or cling film only after it has cooled.
- Store raw meat and poultry in sealed, moisture proof plastic bags to avoid contamination or dripping into other foods.
- Wrap the cooked meat tightly while storing.
- Do not use the refrigerator to cool foods that are at high temperatures. The escaping steam will not only increase the frost formation on the refrigerator coils, but will also increase the temperature inside the refrigerator, thus favouring growth of dormant microbes. Cool such foods quickly before placing them in the refrigerator.
- Follow the FIFO Rule – First In, First Out. Foods that are put in the refrigerator first should be the first to be taken out.
- Do not overstuff the refrigerator.

CLEAN YOUR REFRIGERATOR REGULARLY

- Clean your refrigerator inside out every two weeks.
- Make sure there is no spillage, and that any accidental spillage is cleaned immediately.
- Throw away any food that is spoiled and clean the refrigerator immediately afterwards.
- Use a clean cloth and disinfectant or warm soda solution for cleaning and wiping the refrigerator surfaces.
- Make sure the regulator is functional.
- Defrost your refrigerator every two weeks, if it is not a frost-free model, preferably at the time of cleaning.



PREPARING AND COOKING FOOD

While preparing food, it is critically important to make sure that the food is cleaned properly, cooked in such a way that it retains its nutritional as well as health benefits, and does not get contaminated. The following Dos and DON'Ts tell you how:

DOs AND DON'Ts FOR CLEANING FOOD



- Always keep purchased food on properly cleaned kitchen counters.
- Always wash raw ingredients with clean water.
- Always keep vegetarian and non-vegetarian food items separately.
- Wash, clean, and dry raw fruits and vegetables, before storing in the refrigerator.
- Wash vegetables under running water.
- Avoid washing eggs if the shells are not dirty, as the bacteria present on the shell may enter the egg.
- After handling raw meat, fish, or poultry, wash hands with soap and clean water.
- Make sure to remove spoiled parts from fruits and vegetables.

DOs AND DON'Ts FOR CUTTING & WASHING FOOD



- Do not wash food grains repeatedly before cooking.
- Do not wash fruits and vegetables after cutting or peeling. Wash them before cutting and peeling to avoid losing nutrients.
- Do not soak cut vegetables in water for long periods, otherwise vitamins and minerals will leach out.
- Use separate cutting boards for fresh produce (fruits and vegetables) and animal products (raw meat, poultry, and seafood).
- Never place cooked food on a plate that previously held raw meat, poultry, seafood, or eggs, unless the plate has been washed in hot, soapy water.

DOs AND DON'Ts FOR THAWING FOOD



- Frozen foods should be thawed before they are cooked, unless otherwise specified on the label.
- Food once thawed should never be refrozen, but should be cooked immediately. Thaw only as much food as required.
- Thaw or defrost frozen food using any one of the following methods:
 - In the refrigerator below 4°C
 - Under cold, clean running water while it is still in the packet
 - In the microwave oven if you are cooking it immediately



TIPS FOR HEALTHY COOKING

- Cook food in covered vessels.
- Pressure / steam cooking is preferable for deep frying.
- Avoid use of baking soda while cooking pulses and vegetables.
- Do not reheat the leftover oil repeatedly.
- Refrain from re-using oil after frying. Use fresh oil for other cooking.
- Wash pulses with clean water; pre soak them for about 30-45 minutes before pressure-cooking. Do not discard the water used for soaking.
- Do not throw away the water in which vegetables and rice have been boiled. Use only as much water as required for cooking.
- Do not undercook or overcook the food. Cook on a moderate flame and keep the food covered.
- Use only iodised salt for cooking. Add iodised salt at last as far as possible when cooking to avoid losing iodine because of heat.



HEALTHY COOKING METHODS

Boiling	Rice, Potatoes, Vegetables, Pulses
Steaming	Idli, Dhokla, Khandvi, Sprouts
Stewing	Mutton, Chicken, Vegetables, Fruits
Poaching	Eggs, Chicken, Fish, Fruits
Roasting	Vegetables, Dry savoury snacks (namkeens)
Grilling	Vegetables, Cottage Cheese, Mushroom/ Chicken tikka
Stir Frying	Vegetables, Rice, Noodles



DID YOU KNOW?

Shallow frying is actually **NOT** healthier than deep-frying because the food absorbs **MORE** oil

MATERIALS TO BE USED IN THE MICROWAVE



Material	Recommended	Not Recommended
Glass and ceramic	If heat resistant	Glazed ceramics, dinnerware with silver or gold trim, utensils with metal trim or screws in lids or handles, ceramic mugs with glued handles
Paper products	White microwave safe paper towels, paper plates labelled as microwave safe	Dyed paper products, Newspaper and brown paper bags.
Plastics	Microwave safe plastics. Slitting the top is recommended to prevent pressure build-up.	Thin storage bags, plastic wrap, take out containers and one-time use plastic containers. Minimal contact between the plastic and food is recommended to avoid migration of plasticizers into the food.
Metal Containers such as Aluminium		Never to be used.



TIPS FOR MICROWAVE COOKING

Microwave ovens are used frequently in homes to boil water, thaw frozen food, reheat food, and make simple dishes. While microwave cooking is fast, with less nutrient loss, it carries the danger of overcooked or unevenly cooked food.

- Use only food grade plastic, ceramic and glass containers that are labelled 'microwave safe' for cooking or heating in the microwave.
- When reheating food, take only the portion to be served and reheat it in the microwave. Avoid repeated reheating.
- Reheat chapatti and bread for a few seconds only to prevent it from becoming tough.
- Do not cook eggs in the microwave oven.
- Stir food a few times while it is being cooked.
- Microwave ovens can cook food unevenly and can leave cold areas where microbes can survive and grow. Uneven heating can create 'hot spots' in the food and burn the tongue.

SERVING FOOD

Having cooked the food properly, it is equally important to serve it in a clean, healthy and safe manner.

SAFE SERVING MATERIALS

DO...use

- Stainless steel utensils
- Copper utensils
- Food grade glass, ceramic, or porcelain
- Safe disposable ware or single service items

DON'T...use

- Do not use any kind of plastic ware to serve food.
- Do not use newspaper to serve food.
- Do not serve anything sour in non-tinned copper and brass utensils, or in aluminium utensils.



SAFE SERVING TIPS

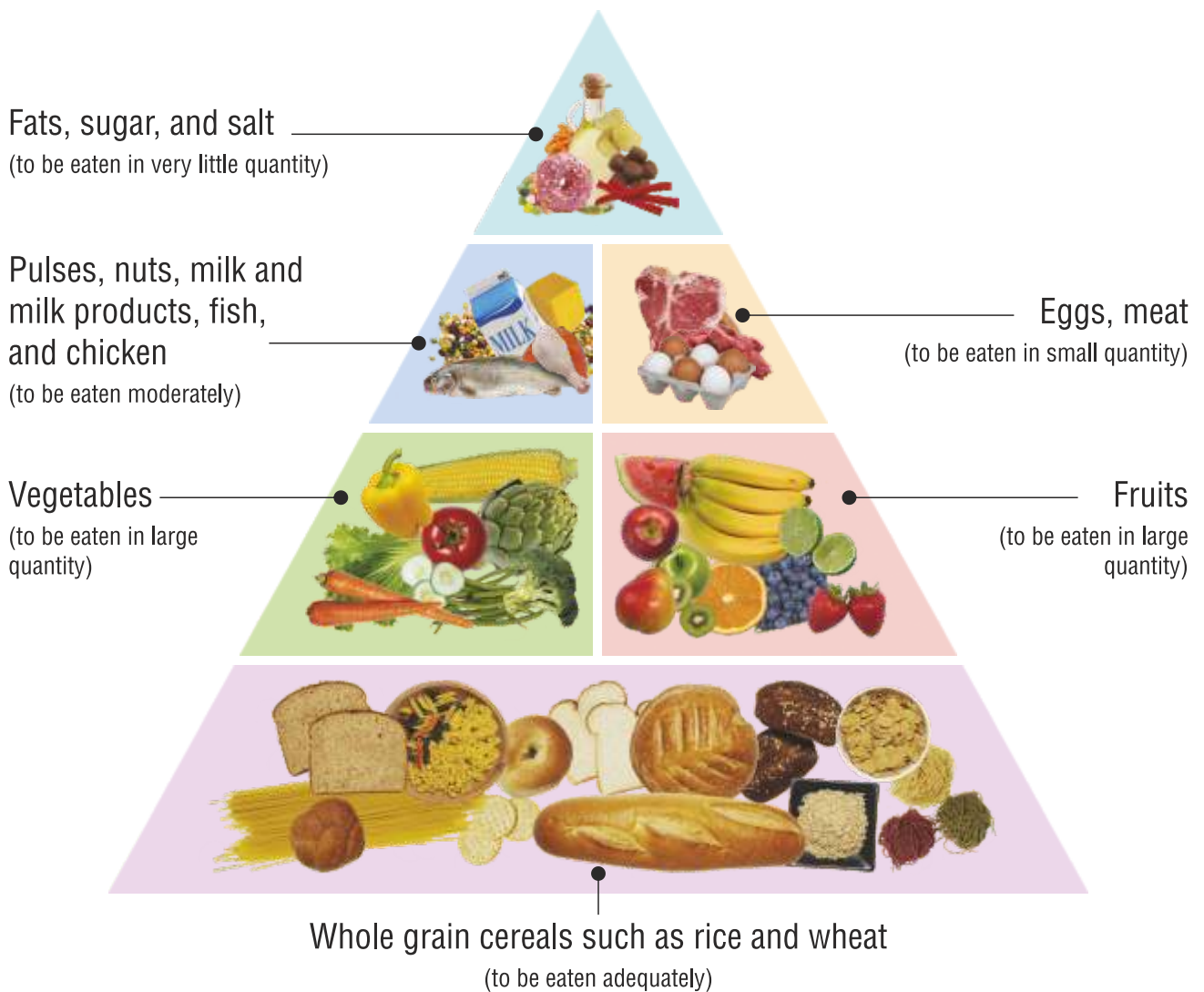
- Keep food covered after it has been prepared, prior to serving.
- Make sure that the plates and serving utensils are washed and air-dried.
- Do not reuse disposable-ware.
- Do not heat food in disposable ware.
- Eat food soon after it is cooked. Eat freshly prepared food as far as possible.
- Serve food in a clean environment, using clean crockery and cutlery. Always make sure to clean between the prongs of a fork.
- Food should be served hot. Cooked food can be kept hot in an insulated, double walled casserole before serving.
- Cold foods should be served chilled and stored in the fridge.
- If single service items are used for service, do not reuse them.
- Do not waste food. Take only as much as you can eat.
- Wash dishes/tiffin boxes well with soap and detergent after the meal is over.
- Wash hands with soap and clean water before serving food.
- Do not serve food or put ice in a glass with bare hands. Use a serving spoon, tongs or wear disposable gloves while handling ready-to-eat food.

EATING HEALTHY FOOD

As important as it is to cook and serve food in a proper, healthy and safe manner, it is also vitally important to 'eat healthy', or, in other words, plan out your meals to ensure a healthy, balanced diet.

BASIC GUIDE TO HEALTHY EATING

FOOD PYRAMID for a complete and balanced diet



DID YOU KNOW?

A balanced diet contains different types of foods (from all food groups) in such quantities and proportions that the need for all the nutrients such as carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, minerals, water, and fibre are adequately met.

PLANNING YOUR MEALS



- Remember, whole grain cereals at the bottom of the pyramid are the basic foundation of our daily diet. They are rich in complex carbohydrates and should be consumed as the main source of energy.
- Vegetable and fruits on the next level are excellent sources of numerous nutrients, especially essential vitamins and minerals. They help protect the body from infections and strengthen the immune system. They help in providing relief from constipation and reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, hypertension, and diabetes.
- Aim to eat at least five servings of different coloured fruits and vegetables every day (Eat 5-A-Day).
- In the 5-A-Day plan, ensure that at least two servings are of green leafy vegetables or orange/yellow fruits and vegetables.
- Fresh, frozen, dried, canned and juiced forms of fruits and vegetables — all count as servings. Potatoes are not included in the vegetable list of the 5-A-day plan because they are mostly starch.
- Choose to eat whole fruits instead of fruit juices, which are devoid of dietary fibre.
- A 150ml glass of 100% fruit or vegetable juice counts as 1 serving. Avoid drinking too much juice.
- Pulses and nuts, milk and milk products, fish and chicken, which are placed on the third level of the pyramid, are very useful for the body as they are rich sources of proteins. Proteins are the building blocks of our body, required for normal body functioning. Muscles, bones, skin and hair are all mainly made of proteins.
- Include meat, fish and chicken in your diet in reasonable quantities. Take care not to consume excessive fatty/processed meats, which can increase risk of heart disease.
- Eggs and red meat are nutritious for children and adolescents but can cause diseases if taken in excess in later years. These are rich sources of proteins but also contain a lot of fat.
- Foods like oil, ghee and butter are rich sources of fat, which is essential for absorption of nutrients and normal body functioning. Fats and oils are part of a healthy diet, but the type of fat and the total amount of fat to be consumed needs to be carefully considered. A high intake of fat, including saturated fats, trans-fats and cholesterol, increases the risk of heart disease.
- Salt is an essential ingredient of diet and enhances its taste and flavour. However, eating too much salt is linked with high blood pressure and an increased risk of heart attacks, strokes and congestive heart failure. Avoid highly salted foods like pickles, chutneys, papads, namkeens etc. If you suffer from hypertension it is best to restrict the intake of salt.
- Use added sugar in moderation. Beside the sugar that one normally consumes, many foods such as milk and fruits naturally contain sugar.
- Fats along with salt, sugar/jaggery, though essential and beneficial in young age, should be consumed with caution as age advances.



DID YOU KNOW?

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends an intake of 2 grams of sodium per day, which is about 5 grams of salt per day. This is equivalent to 1 teaspoon per day.



DOs AND DON'Ts OF HEALTHY EATING



- Eat enough food for your requirements and practice moderation. Typically growing children and pregnant and lactating mothers need more food and nutrients. Our nutritional needs also increase when we are recovering from an illness. As a normal adult, it is best to eat when you are hungry and eat until you are almost, but not completely, full. This will prevent both under-eating and overeating.
- Eat mindfully. Pay attention to what you are eating, and how 'full' you feel. Chew slowly and enjoy the food – the taste, smell and texture. Do not eat while watching TV or engaged in any other task. Avoid eating when stressed, as you are likely to make poor choices or overeat.
- Include a variety of foods in your diet. This not only makes the meal more interesting and appetising, but also enhances its nutritional value.
- Do grocery shopping and plan your meals for the day in advance so that you can choose sensibly, instead of eating without thinking on the spur of the moment.
- Drink 6-8 glasses of water every day. Drink more water in hot weather and you are sweating, or when you exercise. Water is essential for life should be taken so as to avoid dehydration.
- Drink lukewarm water as far as possible and sip it slowly throughout the day.
- Enjoy 4-5 small meals every day instead of just 2-3 meals in a day. Smaller, frequent meals are better absorbed. Occasionally missing meals may not be harmful but doing so habitually will deprive the body of essential nutrients. Be especially careful not to skip breakfast. It is the most important meal of the day.
- Choose healthy, traditional home made food instead of processed, ready to eat convenience foods. Processed foods are generally refined, calorie dense and the majority of them are rich in fat or in salt/sugar.
- If you're watching your weight, choose small portion sizes by eating in smaller plates and using smaller serving and eating spoons.
- Limit sugary drinks as they contain a lot of calories without any nutrients.
- Avoid smoking and limit the amount of alcohol you consume.
- Enjoy your food. Emotional stress and denial may lead to a change in attitude towards foods and modifications in food habits.

CLEAN WATER

- Use only clean water for drinking and cooking food.
- Unsafe water can lead to several infections and diarrhoeal diseases such as cholera, dysentery, and giardiasis.
- Unclean water can be purified at home by boiling it in a clean container and then letting it cool.



HEALTHY EATING TIPS WHEN EATING OUT

- Start your meals with appetizers like soups or salads.
- If unsure about the source and hygiene, avoid uncooked salads and raw preparations.
- Look for grilled and roasted preparations in general, and especially if you want to watch your weight.
- Limit the intake of alcoholic beverages and sugar drinks.
- Skip desserts if possible, or choose fruits. Take care to avoid creamy or deep fried desserts if you are concerned about your weight.
- If you have had a heavy meal, make sure the subsequent meal is lighter.
- Avoid deep fried foods like poories, bhaturas, kachoris etc. if you want to watch your weight.
- Check the hygiene of the food establishment and food handler.
- Avoid eating from roadside vendors. Check whether the food is kept covered and not exposed to flies and dust.
- Avoid “super-sizing” your meal. Choose medium sized meals.

DID YOU KNOW?

Fad diets may help in losing weight but they have a short-lived effect. A fad diet is not a sensible diet, which is why one may lose muscle rather than excess body fat when following it. There is bound to be rebound weight gain once



TIPS FOR HEALTHY SNACKING

It is good to have at least 4-5 small meals daily. Some of these meals may be snacks. Some examples of healthy snacks are :



One medium sized whole fruit



Raw vegetables with curd dip



Puffed wheat/rice/lotus seeds



Steamed sprouts



A handful of all nuts/peanuts/gram /seeds (roasted and unsalted)

EXERCISE



- Be physically active on a regular basis throughout the day. It is recommended that exercising 4-5 times a week for at least 30 minutes per session is good for health.
- Some specific exercises should be included to improve and strengthen the muscles.
- Stretch before and after exercising. Be careful not to overdo exercises, especially physically strenuous exercises.
- Make sure you take enough rest and drink enough water when you exercise.
- Even if you don't have enough time to exercise daily, take small steps to become more active on a daily basis.
- Limit screen time on phones and TV.
- Avoid sitting idle during your free time and take up hobbies and activities that engage your attention and your body.
- Take the stairs instead of the lift.
- Walk instead of taking the car, cycle or bike.
- Household chores such as cleaning, ironing, grocery shopping, and cooking are also forms of exercise. Do household chores to remain active.
- Take frequent short breaks to walk around and stretch, if required to sit in one place for a long time.

STORING COOKED FOOD

It is best to eat food when it is freshly prepared. However, if there are leftovers after a meal, it is essential to store them in the proper way.



BASIC TIPS FOR STORING COOKED FOOD

Food left over in the hot container is exposed to additional contamination. Do not consume perishable leftovers, which have been at room temperature for more than two hours. However, most foods can be kept for a day if they have not been handled much, are stored at the correct temperature and are reheated adequately.

- Handle leftover food carefully to avoid contamination through dirty knives, chopping boards, equipment etc.
- Never mix leftovers with fresh food. Cover leftovers carefully and store them away from fresh and raw foods to avoid a possible risk of cross-contamination.
- When deciding whether or not to use leftover food, always remember: 'if in doubt, throw it out'.
- Certain foods, such as sterilised canned foods, are processed in such a way as to prevent growth of pathogens. However, always refrigerate canned foods, which have only been pasteurised (as indicated on the label).
- Always refrigerate canned foods, which have been opened, as well as tetra-packed foods such as milk and juices.
- Always refrigerate sandwiches (with perishable fillings), and milk products such as paneer and khoya, and use within 24 hours.
- Prepare food fresh, as far as possible, and in just enough quantity so as to minimise wastage.





REFRIGERATING LEFTOVERS

- Refrigerate food within two hours of preparation, especially in a tropical country like India.
- Sort all excess food into various categories and store accordingly.
- Always place cooked food or leftovers in the top shelf of the fridge.

RE-HEATING LEFTOVERS

- Do not reheat leftovers repeatedly.
- Heat only the amount of food that is to be consumed put the rest back in the fridge.
- Make sure to bring soups and gravy to a boil when reheating.
- You can safely reheat Ready-to-Eat meals in combination ovens, steamers, gas burners or hot plates.
- Defrost frozen meals in a rapid thawing cabinet before placing it in the oven to be reheated.
- Use only microwave-safe utensils while heating in the microwave.
- Stir food thoroughly to ensure proper, even heating of food in the microwave.



TIPS FOR REPURPOSING LEFTOVERS

- Leftover dals can be added to atta to make delicious rotis.
- Leftover vegetables can be made into patties and eaten with bread sandwiches.
- Leftover rice can be re-cooked to make lemon rice, puliyogare, cutlets, etc.



PACKING FOOD

When the food prepared is not to be consumed fresh and hot, but packed as a lunchbox to be eaten later, packing the food properly is important so that it retains its taste, freshness and nutritional benefits.



SAFE PACKAGING MATERIAL

- Never use newspaper, any other kind of ordinary paper or plastic bags to pack food.
- Use butter paper, instead, to pack food such as chapattis and paranthas.



TIPS FOR PACKING LUNCH BOXES

- Use a non-reactive, non-corrosive container/tiffin/lunch box. Choose stainless steel or food grade plastics only.
- Make sure that the lunch boxes have tight fitting lids (preferably with a locking system) so that the food does not spill.
- Wash, clean, and dry lunch boxes before using them.
- Choose lunch boxes in simple shapes, which can be cleaned easily.
- Use only microwavable plastic lunch boxes for heating in the microwave.
- Do not consume packed food if it has been kept for long hours or has foul odour/ taste.



PACKING APPETISING LUNCHBOXES

It is important that food which cannot be served fresh and hot, but has to be packed for later consumption, be made as attractive and healthy as possible, to make it enjoyable and beneficial to eat. Here are some tips:

- Vary lunchbox contents for a good balance of nutrients.
- Seasonal fruits and vegetables add colour and texture, and are often cheaper and tastier.
- Opt for finger foods of all kinds, particularly fruit and vegetables, to make the packed lunch attractive for children and encourage them to try new foods.
- Child-sized utensils, crockery, tables, and chairs may also make it easier for children to serve themselves and learn to eat independently.

HEALTHY LUNCH-BOX RECIPES



- Choose any traditional snack made with local, seasonal foods. For a cereal-pulse combination you could try stuffed dal parantha, palak-besan poori, thalipeeth, thepla, idli, dhokla, poha, upma, kathi rolls, etc., which are both, nutritious and tasty.
- Dairy foods such as cheese or plain curd with added fruit/vegetables/boondi make a healthy and filling option.
- Fresh fruits such as pears, apples, bananas, seedless grapes, slices of melon, mango, pineapple, plums, or berries such as strawberries and raspberries make attractive and healthy tiffin box contents. Fresh fruits can also be added to flavour curds.
- Raw vegetables such as peeled carrots, sweet pepper, tomato, cucumber or celery, can be packed along with dips such as hummus, Greek yoghurt with chives, hung curd dips.
- Homemade plain popcorns, chiwda, bhel mixture, idli, dosa and uttapam.
- Pizzas, pastas, burgers, and tacos can be made healthy with the following suggestions:
 - ★ Use whole wheat bread
 - ★ Use lots of vegetables
 - ★ Make non-fried patties from paneer/chicken/channa/soya/kidney beans
 - ★ Add lots of salad leaves
 - ★ Add slices of cottage cheese

MAINTAINING HYGIENE AND SANITATION

PERSONAL HYGIENE TIPS WHILE HANDLING FOOD

DOs

- Whenever you handle any kind of food, ensure that any cuts, wounds or scratches on your hands, are covered with waterproof dressing to prevent contaminating the food.
- Make sure your hair is neatly combed and tied and your head is covered with a scarf while cooking. There should be no stray hair because they might fall into the food while cooking. Do not comb hair in the kitchen.
- Wash your hands with soap and clean water thoroughly for 20 seconds and dry them before and after handling food. Hands should be washed thoroughly after using the toilet, otherwise germs from dirty hands can contaminate the food.
- Keep nails short and clean and avoid nail polish if you are cooking. Dirt from nails or harmful dyes from nail polish might contaminate the food.
- Make sure you wear clean and preferably cotton clothes while cooking. Wear an apron if possible.
- Tuck your pallus, dupattas, scarves or any loose flowing clothes while working in the kitchen.



DON'Ts

- Do not sneeze or cough while preparing food, or at least cover your mouth and then wash your hands immediately afterwards, to avoid spreading infection.
- Do not handle food if you have jaundice, diarrhoea, vomiting, fever, sore throat, skin rashes, cough, cold, itchiness or discharge from ears, eyes, or nose, or any kind of infection, otherwise your infection can spread to those who eat the food.
- Do not use gadgets like phones or remote control while cooking food. The germs from these frequently handled gadgets can contaminate the food.
- Do not wear hand jewellery such as fancy, studded rings while preparing and handling food. Dough, or hidden dirt and grime, can accumulate in the ring and spoil the food. It is also possible that you might drop your jewellery in the cooking dish.
- Do not smoke or eat paan, gutka, betelnuts etc. while preparing food. Our saliva contains hundreds of germs, which can spoil the food.
- Do not scratch your head or dig your nose while handling food, as body secretions and dirt can spoil the food.
- Do not wipe hands on clothes or hair while cooking. Use a clean cloth to wipe hands and wash this cloth regularly.
- Do not taste food to check if it is contaminated. Even a small amount of spoiled food can cause health problems. When in doubt, throw it out.



DID YOU KNOW?

More than 200 diseases are spread through contaminated water or food, causing millions of children to die each year from diarrhoeal diseases alone. Unclean water can cause diseases like typhoid and hepatitis.

HAND WASHING

STEP 1



Wet hands with water.

STEP 2



Soap and scrub them for 20 seconds.

STEP 3



Rinse under clean running water.

STEP 4



Dry using a clean paper or cloth towel.

STEP 5

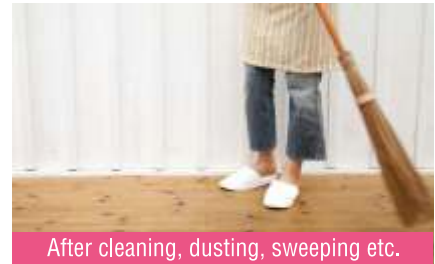


Turn off the tap with the towel.

WHEN TO WASH HANDS



After touching any part of the body or bodily fluids



After cleaning, dusting, sweeping etc.



Before and after handling food



After using any chemicals



Before entering the kitchen from outside



After using or cleaning the toilet or changing diapers, or touching anything dirty



After touching animals and their equipment

DID YOU KNOW?



The most common symptoms of illnesses caused by unsafe food are stomach pains, vomiting and diarrhoea. See a doctor immediately if you experience these symptoms. Drink plenty of ORS solution (water with salt/electrolytes and sugar) to prevent dehydration. Consult the doctor if the symptoms do not improve.



KEEP YOUR KITCHEN CLEAN

- Wash chopping boards, dishes, utensils, knives and counter-tops with hot soapy water after each round of food preparation
- Use clean cloths to wipe kitchen surfaces, utensils, and tables.
- Make sure that the floors are swept and mopped with hot water and disinfectant at least twice a day.
- Ensure that the drains are covered with a removable wire mesh/ lid so that solid kitchen waste does not get swept into the drains and clog them.
- Make sure that the drains are scrubbed and cleaned with an antiseptic.
- It is advisable to clean shelves/ storage cupboards at least once every two weeks. They should be first emptied, then dusted and cleaned thoroughly using hot water and detergent.
- Make sure that the kitchen walls, ceilings, fittings, and fixtures are cleaned every week.
- Empty out dustbins and dispose off the garbage daily.

CLEANING KITCHEN EQUIPMENT/APPLIANCES



- Choose kitchen equipment and containers made of materials, which can be cleaned and sanitized with no toxic effect on food.
- You only need to sanitize surfaces that come in contact with the food and mouth.
- Make sure that large equipment is durable and movable, or capable of being disassembled to allow cleaning, disinfection, and maintenance, with no place for pests to breed.
- Clean and defrost (if necessary) your refrigerator once a fortnight, as already mentioned earlier.
- Use water and a disinfectant to clean equipment.
- Make sure appliances are switched off when they are being cleaned.
- Ensure appliances are dried after cleaning and before use.
- Use a clean, damp cloth to clean equipment. Use separate cloths for cleaning appliances, utensils, and kitchen surfaces.

CLEANING DISH / WASH CLOTHS



- Fill a pot with water.
- Bring it to a boil.
- Add the dirty rags to the boiling water.
- Boil for 15 minutes. The boiling water will sanitize the cloth by killing any mold, mildew, bacteria and germs that may remain after washing.
- After boiling, wash and dry as normal with soap for cleaning cloth.
- The cloths should look clean and smell fresh.
- Keep separate cleaning cloths for appliances, equipment, utensils and kitchen surfaces.

CLEANING UTENSILS



- Scrape and pre-rinse dishes before washing them to remove loose oil. Soaking in hot water also helps to remove food stuck to the utensils.
- Wash and scrub the utensils in hot water and detergent.
- Rinse the utensils in water till clean to touch.
- Sanitize in hot water for one minute, or with chemical sanitizer.
- Air dry and store cleaned dishes properly to avoid contamination.
- Store pans and glasses in an inverted position.



PEST CONTROL

Pests are harmful because they can contaminate food, utensils, work area, surfaces, hand towels, kitchen cloth etc. with harmful germs, or poison food by their dead bodies or body parts such as droppings, hair, skin, feathers, larvae, etc.

COMMON PEST CONTROL METHODS



- Check food items for the presence of insects, damaged grains, powdered grains etc. before purchase/storage. Check bags/sacks for insect eggs and body parts such as droppings.
- Fly proof doors/windows with screens.
- Use mosquito/insecticide sprays (cover food items carefully before spraying).
- Use chalk coated with insecticidal powder or dust (used mostly for ants and cockroaches). Apply it carefully, away from food items and food contact surfaces.
- Use meals/baits to trap pests so that they eat it and die. Carefully remove all dead pests subsequently.
- Use insect light traps.
- Apply pesticide to cracks, crevices, underside of tables, cupboards, equipment, behind the sink and other such non-visible spots that could shelter pests.
- Use pesticides carefully. Tie pesticide tablets properly in cloth to keep in the grain bins and remove them before using the grains.
- Use mouse traps on the expected mouse 'runways' (place two traps in the opposite direction) or use bait poison.



TIPS TO CONTROL PESTS IN THE KITCHEN

- Make a habit of cleaning after cooking/having food. Do not leave crumbs lying around.
- Keep all food that is not being used in the refrigerator or freezer, as appropriate.
- Keep all food items covered.
- Use glue/cement to seal any cracks around the home.
- Dispose food waste in covered waste bins only. Separate liquid and dry food waste.
- Dispose-off garbage daily.
- Discard infested food.
- Clean and dry containers before storing grains.
- Keep kitchen/storage ventilated, cool, dry and clean.
- Keep sacks of grain/flour away from the walls, in a ventilated and well lit place.
- Use proper pest control methods to reduce infestation of pests.
- Get herbal pest control done every two weeks.
- Keep the kitchen and other food-related areas well-lighted and ventilation.
- Clean damp places regularly.

GARBAGE DISPOSAL

- It is necessary to discard waste promptly, and only in the dustbins.
- Never allow garbage to remain near cooking areas as it attracts insects and pests, and encourages microbial growth, thereby contaminating food.
- Clean the floor below garbage bins with detergent. Mop with an antiseptic and let it dry before replacing the garbage bins.
- Clean garbage bins regularly with hot water and detergent and dry them completely before lining with a plastic bag.
- Do not allow any garbage to spill around.
- If garbage has to be kept overnight before disposal, it should be kept sealed in polythene bags in the backyard (away from the kitchen) in a cool, covered place.

WASTE SEGREGATION

Separate biodegradable and non-biodegradable kitchen waste and put it in the appropriate bins.

BIODEGRADABLE WASTE



- Food peels/ trimmings
- Plate waste/ leftover food

NON-BIODEGRADABLE WASTE



- Paper (cartons, packing materials)
- Glassware (bottles)
- Plastics (canisters, jars)
- Metals (cans, bins)

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FEEDBACK FORM

Name

Address

Contact Information

Gender : Male Female

Number of People in your household :

Did you find the Pink Book useful ? Yes No

Did you find the Pink Book easy to read? Yes No

Would you like to know more about food safety and nutrition? Yes No

What do you think should be added to the book?

What do you think should be removed from the books?

What do you think should be removed from the books?

Please add any other suggestions for the Pink Book.

Please send this form by post or email to:

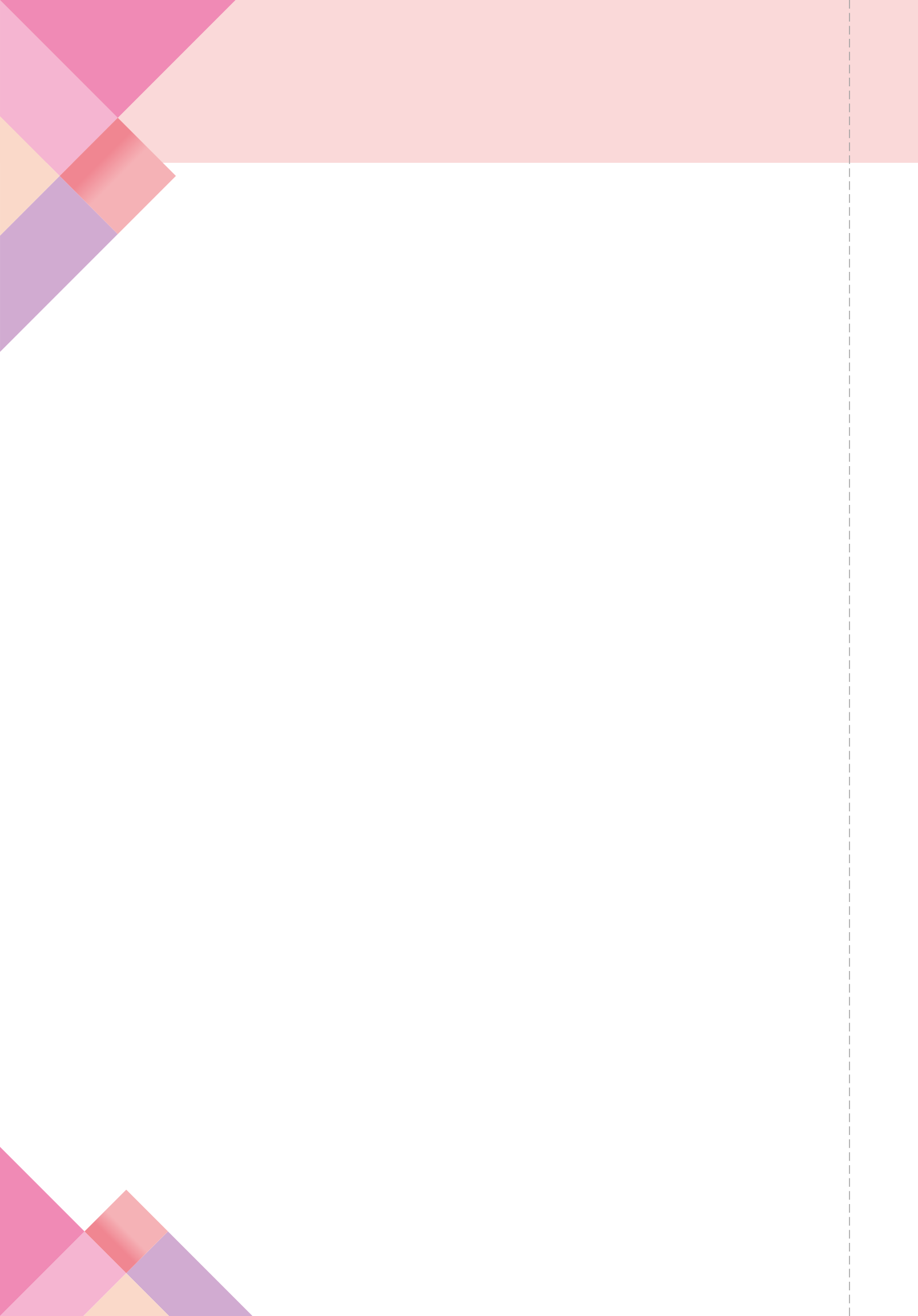
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Inspiring Trust, Assuring Safe & Nutritious Food
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India

Food Safety Connect



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ISSUED IN PUBLIC INTEREST