

**Public Advisory Note 8
The Preparation of Packed Lunches**

This Leaflet sets out simple guidelines on how to safeguard the health of your family by following good food hygiene practice.

Bacteria can contaminate food in the following ways by unwashed hands, by contaminated utensils and work surfaces, improper preparation, inadequate cooking and storage of food. To prevent unnecessary exposure of food to food poisoning or dysentery bacteria follow the guidelines .

10 POINT GUIDE TO PREPARING PACKED LUNCHES

One Buy food from clean shops and get it home quickly
Two Perishable food such as cooked meats, soft cheeses should be stored under refrigeration. The refrigerator should be kept at 5 degree C. or below.
Three Cooked food should be stored well away and above raw foods in the refrigerator.
Four Hands should be washed well before preparing food and always after visiting the toilet.
Five Work surfaces, chopping boards and dish cloths should be cleaned regularly. Separate chopping boards should be used one for raw food preparation and a second for cooked food.
Six When preparing sandwiches keep the sandwich ingredients at room temperature for the shortest time possible and use utensils to reduce the amount of handling.
Seven Always dispose of foods which are past the "use by" date recommended by the manufacturer.
Eight Wash salads, fruit and vegetables thoroughly before eating.
Nine Ideally, packed lunches should be prepared on the day the food is to be eaten. If prepared in advance, i.e. the night before, then the packed lunch should be refrigerated.
Ten Always cover the prepared food well to prevent any contamination, while the packed lunch is taken from the home to place of consumption. Luncheon boxes are ideal in protecting the food from damage as well as contamination, and preferably transport in a cool bag with plenty of ice packs.

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