

# A Healthier You

## New Recommendations in Cooking Temperatures



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

### New Temperature Recommendations Make Food-Safe Cooking Easier

Are you ever worried about overcooking your family's meals?

Worry no longer as things in the home kitchen have just become easier! There's good news on the cooking front for consumers. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has recently updated their guidance for safe cooking of meat at home...and their recommendations may surprise you.

In today's economy, it's practical to make every penny count – and consumers no longer have to fret about overcooking that roast for dinner or ruining other cuts of meat if they follow a few simple rules.



USDA now recommends a single temperature of 145°F for all whole cuts of meat – pork, beef, veal or lamb. Once meat reaches 145°F, as tested with a food thermometer, just let it stand (rest) for 3 minutes before eating.

Ground meats, such as used in hamburgers or meatloaf still should be cooked to 160°F.

The safe cooking temperature for all poultry products, including ground chicken and turkey has not changed. These meats should be cooked to 165°F.

These changes were made to make cooking temperatures easier for consumers to remember, and result in safer food preparation.



### **3** numbers to remember

**145°F** for whole meats

**160°F** for ground meats

**165°F** for all poultry



## Color Can't Tell You if Meat is Done

Appearance in meat is not a reliable indicator of safety or risk. If raw pork is cooked to 145 °F and allowed to rest for three minutes, it may still be pink but is safe to eat. The pink color can be due to the cooking method, added ingredients, or other factors. As always, cured pork (e.g., cured ham and cured pork chops) will remain pink after cooking.

Only by using a food thermometer can consumers determine if meat has reached a sufficient temperature to destroy pathogens of public health concern.



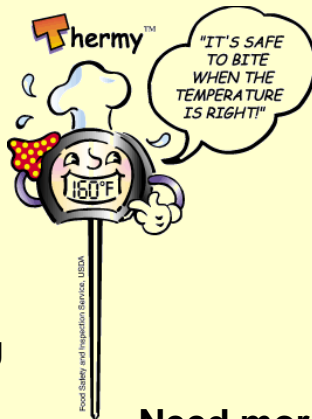
## How Do You Use a Food Thermometer?

Place the food thermometer in the thickest part of the food. It should not touch bone, fat, or gristle. Start checking the temperature toward the end of cooking, but before you expect it to be done. Be sure to clean your food thermometer with hot soapy water before and after each use.

Cooked meat, poultry and seafood can be safely stored in the refrigerator for 3 or 4 days.

## Rest Time is Important

A "rest time" is the amount of time meat remains at the final temperature, after it has been removed from a grill, oven, or other heat source. During the three minutes after meat is removed from the heat source, its temperature remains constant or continues to rise, which destroys pathogens.



## It's Safe to Bite When the Temperature is Right!

Smart use of thermometers and knowledge of proper food temperatures can help busy cooks make tastier, food-safe meals for their families.

## Need more safe cooking information?

Check out these websites:

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/>

[www.fightbac.org](http://www.fightbac.org)