

SAFETY SENSE

Test Your Meat And Poultry Safety IQ

(NAPSA)—Experts say the meat and poultry supply is safe and getting safer thanks to new technologies. But like all agricultural products, meat and poultry must be handled and cooked properly to ensure safety when served.

Test your food safety IQ by circling T or F. Check your responses against the key that follows.

Q1. The food safety danger zone is between 40 degrees F and 140 degrees F. T or F

Q2. If a hamburger is no longer pink in the middle, it's safe to eat. T or F

Q3. Turkey burgers and hamburgers should be cooked to the same internal temperature. T or F

Q4. Muscle cuts like steak or roasts can be eaten rare. T or F

Q5. Frozen meat and poultry can be defrosted on the counter. T or F

Q6. Pregnant women and others with compromised immune systems should reheat lunch meats before consuming them. T or F

Q7. When grilling, it is acceptable to use the plate that held raw meat to serve cooked meat. T or F

Q8. Use separate cutting boards for produce and meat products. T or F

Answers:

1) True: Bacteria multiply much faster when held between



When grilling, wash any plate, cutting board or utensil that contacted raw meat in hot, soapy water prior to using it with cooked meat products.

40 degrees and 140 degrees F.

2) False: Color is not an accurate indicator of doneness. Always use a digital food thermometer to check the temperature.

3) False: Hamburgers should be cooked to 160 degrees F while poultry burgers should be cooked to 165 degrees F.

4) True: Muscle cuts that have not been ground or pierced are sterile in the middle. Searing the outside of a steak, and cooking the inside to a medium-rare temperature of approximately 145 degrees F, is safe.

5) False: Defrost meat overnight in the refrigerator, microwave or in cold water. Meat can enter the temperature “danger

zone” when left on the counter overnight.

6) True: *Listeria monocytogenes*, a bacterium that thrives in cold environments and is commonly found in soil, in drains of processing plants and sometimes in consumers’ refrigerators, can survive normal steps to prevent its presence on foods like lunch meats, hot dogs and unpasteurized soft cheeses. Experts advise reheating hot dogs and luncheon meats to steaming hot before consuming them during pregnancy or if you are immunocompromised due to illness or advanced age.

7) False: Wash any plate, cutting board or utensil that contacted raw meat in hot, soapy water prior to using it with cooked meat products.

8) True: A cutting board that held raw meat can contaminate other foods cut on the surface later. A single cutting board can be used if it is thoroughly washed in hot soapy water between uses, but it is smart to use separate cutting boards.

Scoring: All eight correct—you are a food safety scholar. Seven or fewer correct—study up. Even a single mistake can be serious. Visit www.meatmattersinfo.org to download the free safe food handling brochure.