



Food-borne Illness

Extremely hot days can cause power outages that cause refrigeration systems in trucks, warehouses, stores, and homes to fail. This can mean food is not kept at safe temperatures, which can lead to food spoiling during transport or storage. Perishable foods at risk of spoiling include meat, eggs, dairy, cut fruit, some vegetables, cooked rice, and leftovers.

Hot and humid days can also create ideal conditions for bacteria like salmonella to grow. When these bacteria grow on the food we eat, they can cause gastrointestinal illnesses such as upset stomach, diarrhea, vomiting, and dehydration.

Who is at higher risk?

- People over age 65
- Children under age 5
- Pregnant people
- People with compromised immune systems

What can we do about it?

- Check your fridge and pantry for items that may be potentially contaminated
- Do not let perishable food sit out for more than an hour during transport and handling
- If refrigerator and freezer doors stay closed, food will stay safe for up to: 4 hours in a refrigerator, 48 hours in a full freezer, 24 hours in a half-full freezer
- Throw out perishable food in your refrigerator (meat, fish, cut fruits and vegetables, eggs, milk, and leftovers) after 4 hours without power
- Use coolers to transport refrigerated and frozen food
- Check temperatures: refrigerators should be 35°-38°F and freezers should be below 0°F
- Handle and cook food according to safe preparation directions

