

coolest place possible, never in front of a window in the sun.

In order to keep food hot for several hours, use a thermos designed to keep food hot. Heat the food as much as you can before placing it in the thermos. The food should still be hot to the touch when eaten. Wash the thermos well after each use and rinse the inside with boiling water before using it again.

Maintain everything clean while preparing food for school in order to prevent the spread of germs. Make sure that your hands, the utensils and the counter are clean. Wash the food containers including the thermos and lunchbox after each use. Wrap foods in clean wrap. If you use paper bags use ones designed for that purpose. Shopping bags may be contaminated by insects and crumbs from other foods.

Sometimes, foods that do not need to be kept cold or hot may be desirable for these meals. These foods include peanut butter, preserved meats like jerky and some that are not perishable. Other options include canned meat, poultry or seafood that is ready to eat immediately; fresh fruit and vegetables; and breads, cereals and nuts. Some packaged "ready-to-eat" foods in individual portions like canned fruit or pudding are good for these meals.

Remember..

Some foods that do not look, taste or smell bad can still be contaminated with enough bacteria to make you sick. In order to prepare a safe meal follow these tips.

- Keep everything clean when preparing and packing the meal.
- Plan a balanced menu of healthy foods that have been prepared correctly. Make sure that any meat has been cooked completely. Don't use leftovers that have been in the refrigerator for a long time.
- Keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot. Don't let these foods sit at room temperature for more than two hours.
- Don't use perishable leftovers from school lunches. Throw them away.



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