

Time & Temperature Cooling Method

Instructions

41°F
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Hot food must be cooled to 41°F or below as quickly as possible. Bacteria can grow quickly in cooling food. It is important to cool food through the danger zone (135°F – 41°F) as fast as possible to keep bacteria from growing.

If you do not use the shallow pan method, you must meet the two cooling steps and monitor the process:

Step 1: Cool food, uncovered within 2 hours, from 135°F to 70°F

Step 2: Then cool, within a total of 6 hours, to 41°F

This means that you have a total of 6 hours to complete the cooling steps, but the first step must be completed within the first 2 hours.

Ice Bath Cooling

An example of the time and temperature method is an ice bath. An ice bath works well for thin soups and sauces. Thick foods, such as stews or chilis, should be cooled using the shallow pan method.

Here are the steps for a proper ice bath:

1. Remove food from heat source. Place the container in a clean sink, with stopper in place.
2. Add enough ice to be at the same level of the food, then add just enough water to fill the spaces between the ice cubes.
3. Stir the food every 10-15 minutes.
4. As the ice melts, drain the water, and repeat step 2.
5. Use a dial stem or digital thermometer to monitor the temperature of the food **and make sure the two cooling steps are met**. Temperatures should be taken after stirring and in the center of the product. A temperature log may be required.
6. After food is cooled to 41°F or below, refrigerate or freeze food immediately. Cover the cooled food with a tight-fitting lid, plastic wrap or aluminum foil.

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