



Well NEWS

A Monthly Insight into Health and Wellness



How long can you safely keep leftovers?

This time of year with all of the holiday parties, cooking and entertaining, we often find ourselves with a lot of leftovers. Many times we end up eating the same food for days in an effort not to waste food or time put in to preparing it. But how long after the food is initially prepared is it still safe to eat?



As soon as you have leftovers, make sure to cover, wrap or seal them in storage containers. This will help to keep bacteria out, retain moisture, and prevent leftovers from picking up odors from other food in the refrigerator. Leftovers can be kept for up to three to four days in the refrigerator. Be sure to eat them within that time frame or get rid of them. After that three to four day window, the risk of food poisoning increases. If you don't think you'll be able to eat leftovers within four days, freeze them immediately. Freezing your leftovers gives you a significantly longer amount of time to enjoy them. Frozen leftovers can safely be kept for three to four months.

Food poisoning - also called foodborne illness - is caused by harmful organisms, such as bacteria in contaminated food. Because bacteria typically don't change the taste, smell or look of food, you can't tell whether a food is dangerous to eat. So if you're in doubt about a food's safety, it's best to throw it out.

Fortunately, most cases of food poisoning can be prevented with proper food handling. To practice food safety, quickly refrigerate perishable foods, such as meat, poultry, fish, dairy and eggs - don't let them sit for more than two hours at typical room temperature or more than one hour at temperature above 90 F (32 C).

Uncooked foods, such as cold salads and sandwiches, also should be eaten or refrigerated promptly. Your goal is to minimize the time a food is in the "danger zone" - between 40 to 140 F (1 to 60 C) - when bacteria can quickly multiply.

When you're ready to eat leftovers, reheat them on the stove, in the oven or in the microwave until the internal temperature reaches 165 F (74 C). Because they may not get hot enough, slow cookers and chafing dishes are not recommended for reheating leftovers.

Practice good food handling practices so that you can safely enjoy all of your leftovers!

Newsletter Quiz



1. How many days after they are made can you safely eat leftovers?
2. What kinds of naps are the easiest to wake up from?

To earn your Wellness Incentive Points, e-mail your response to Katie@wellworksinc.com by December 31, 2014.



Importance of Napping



As our day wears on, even when we get enough sleep at night, our focus and alertness degrade. While this can be a minor inconvenience in modern times, it may have meant life or death to our ancestors. Whether you are finishing up a project for work or hunting for your livelihood, a nap can rekindle your alertness and have your neurons back up and firing on high in as little as 15 to 20 minutes.

Studies have affirmed that short naps can improve awareness and productivity. A study from the University of Colorado Boulder found that children who missed their afternoon nap showed less joy and interest, more anxiety, and poorer problem solving skills than other children. The same can be seen in adults that benefit from napping.

So, how long should you nap?

10 to 20 Minutes: The power nap is ideal for a boost in alertness and energy, experts say. This length usually limits you to the lighter stages of non-rapid eye movement (NREM) sleep, making it easier to hit the ground running after waking up.

30 Minutes: Some studies show sleeping this long may cause sleep inertia, a hangover-like groggy feeling that lasts for up to 30 minutes after waking up, before the nap's restorative benefits become apparent.

60 Minutes: This nap is best for improvement in remembering facts, faces and names. It includes slow-wave sleep, the deepest type. The downside is that there is some grogginess upon waking up.

90 Minutes: This is a full cycle of sleep, meaning the lighter and deeper stages, including REM (rapid eye movement) sleep, typically likened to the dreaming stage. This leads to improved emotional and procedural memory (i.e. riding a bike, playing the piano) and creativity. A nap of this length typically avoids sleep inertia, making it easier to wake up.

Recipe

OF THE MONTH

Roasted Cauliflower with Fresh Herbs and Parmesan



Ingredients:

- 12 cups cauliflower florets (about 2 heads)
- 1 ½ tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh tarragon
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- ¼ cup (1 ounce) grated fresh Parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper

Directions:

Preheat oven to 450 degrees.

Place cauliflower in a large roasting pan or jelly-roll pan. Drizzle with oil; toss well to coat. Bake at 450 for 20 minutes or until tender and browned, stirring every 5 minutes. Sprinkle with parsley, thyme, tarragon, and garlic. Bake 5 minutes. Combine cauliflower mixture, and remaining ingredients in a large bowl; toss well to combine.

Nutrition Information Per Serving (about 1 cup): 89 Calories, 3.5g Fat, 0.8g Sat Fat, 5.2g Protein, 12.1 g Carbohydrates, 5.4 g Fiber, 2mg Cholesterol, 251mg Sodium.