



Floods: Four Tips to Reduce Food Safety Risks

For households

Food and water that has been in contact with flood-water may have become unsafe for human consumption. Keep yourself and your family safe and healthy by following these simple tips.

TIP 1

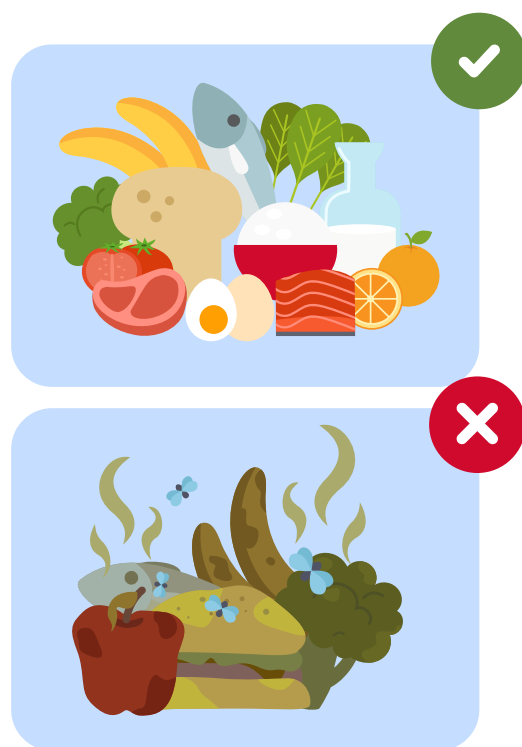
Discard food with signs of contamination.

Discard food that has been in contact with flood-water.

If food smells bad and looks different (for example, slimy or mouldy), it is not safe to eat. Unsafe food to be discarded may include:

- Meat, fruit, vegetables and rice that have been in contact with flood-water.
- Food stored in permeable packaging such as cardboard, plastic wrap, foil, screw-topped jars and bottles that have been in contact with flood-water, even if the contents seem dry.
- Items that cannot be effectively cleaned such as cardboard juice or milk boxes and food containers with screw tops, snap lids, pull tops or crimped caps.

Contamination may occur without visible signs. When in doubt, throw it out.



Purchase and use only safe food and water from reliable and trusted sources.

- Be alert for signs that the food has been exposed to flood-water or harmful chemicals, or has been compromised due to time or temperature mishandling.
- Do not consume food that is clearly labelled as unsafe for human consumption.

TIP 2

Keep food and preparation areas clean and safe.



Sanitize recovered food, food preparation facilities and cookware.

- 1 Purify water for drinking and food preparation. Boil or use purifying tablets or a solution of four drops of unscented household bleach with no additives (5% hydrochloric acid) per litre of water. Wait at least 30 minutes before using or serving boiled or purified water.
- 2 Clean recovered food, including undamaged and unopened canned and bottled goods, with sterilized or chlorinated water. Sanitize food preparation facilities and cookware.

Keep safe food protected. All food and drinks must be stored in cool and dry places, away from high humidity, moisture and direct sunlight.

Clean food before use and cook properly. Wash and clean vegetables and fruits multiple times and peel them before eating. Handle food with clean hands and utensils. Cook food thoroughly.

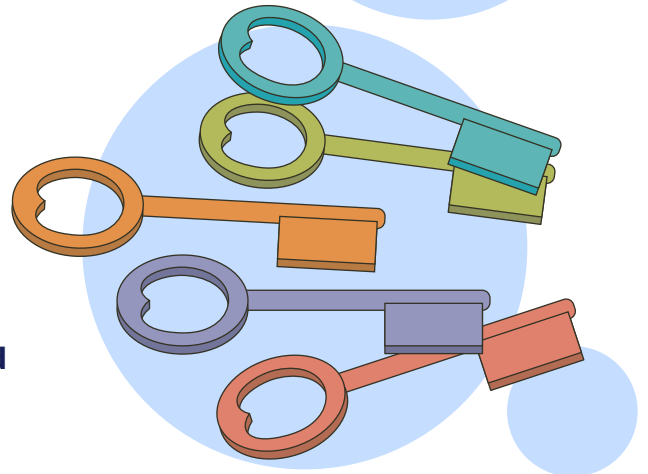
TIP 3

Maintain good food hygiene.

Follow the five keys to safer food.

- 1 **Keep clean**
- 2 **Separate raw and cooked food**
- 3 **Cook thoroughly**
- 4 **Keep food at safe temperatures**
- 5 **Use safe water and raw ingredients**

Wash and dry your hands before preparing food and after using the toilet. Use water mixed with disinfectant if you do not have safe running water and soap.



Maintain exclusive breastfeeding of infants under six months. Do not give them water or other fluids that may contain chemical toxins or microorganisms that may infect them.



TIP 4

Stay informed and healthy.

Follow the advice of local authorities responsible for food safety.

Share this information with your family members and neighbours.

Seek help from a health facility if anyone in your household gets sick. Clean up vomit and faeces to avoid contaminating yourself and others.

For more information, please visit **The Five Keys to Safer Food Programme** recommended by the World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/activities/promoting-safe-food-handling>