

MYTHBUSTERS

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Myth:

I left some food out all day, but if I put it in the fridge now, the bacteria will die.

Fact: Refrigerator temperatures can slow the growth of bacteria, but will not stop the growth of bacteria in food.

If food is left out at room temperature for more than two hours, putting it into the refrigerator will only slow bacterial growth, not kill it. Protect your family by following the 2 hour rule -- refrigerate or freeze meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, cut fresh fruits and vegetables, and all cooked leftovers within 2 hours of cooking or purchasing. Refrigerate within 1 hour if the temperature is above 90 °F.

While refrigeration does slow bacterial growth, most perishables will only keep for a few days in the refrigerator. To keep perishables longer than a few days-- like most meat, poultry and seafood-- you can freeze them.