

**GO 40° F OR BELOW**

**A Cold Fridge Will Help You Reduce Your Risk of Foodborne Illness**

With age comes wisdom. This we can appreciate.  Unfortunately, with age also comes a change in our immune response. As we get older, our immune system becomes a bit sluggish in recognizing and ridding the body of harmful bacteria and other pathogens that can cause foodborne illness. The body doesn’t react like it used to – older adults who contract a foodborne illness are more likely to have a lengthier illness and to be hospitalized. *Listeria* can spread through the bloodstream to cause meningitis and can often be fatal. The older you are, the greater the risk. An adult over 65 is four times more likely to contract Listeriosis than is another healthy adult.



**DON’T WORRY! THERE’S GOOD NEWS!**

Simple solutions like making sure the refrigerator is set at the right temperature could make all the difference. According to a risk assessment produced by the US Food and Drug Administration and the US Department of Agriculture, refrigeration at 40 °F or below is one of the most effective ways to reduce the risk of foodborne illness. The assessment found that the predicted number of cases of Listeriosis would be reduced by more than 70% if all home refrigerator temperatures did not exceed 41 °F. The only way to be sure the home refrigerator is at or below the recommended temperature of 40 °F or below is to measure the temperature with a refrigerator thermometer. This type of thermometer is usually a separate tool that stays in the refrigerator and displays the actual temperature.

As you get older, you need to be especially vigilant when handling, preparing, and consuming foods because you are more susceptible to contracting a foodborne illness. When you understand the cause of foodborne illness and how to prevent it, you can arm yourself with the right tools to protect yourself.

The Partnership for Food Safety Education’s new GO 40 °F OR BELOW campaign was launched to educate consumers, like you, about the importance of home refrigeration reducing the risk of foodborne illnesses. To learn more about how you can protect your family and friends from foodborne illness, and to download a GO 40 °F OR BELOW brochure, visit [www.fightbac.org](http://www.fightbac.org).

The Partnership for Food Safety Education delivers trusted, science-based behavioral health messaging and a network of resources that support consumer in their efforts to reduce risk of foodborne infection.

#Go40orBelow to keep food out of the “danger zone” and follow us @Fight\_BAC for more food safety tips!

1 Center for Disease Control and Prevention