

## Handling and Storage of Baby food:

Young children are at particular risk for foodborne illness, in part because they have developing immune systems that are not strong enough to combat dangerous pathogens. Their lower body weight allows smaller doses of pathogens to have a greater impact on their health, and compared to adults they have reduced stomach acid production. These acids help to contain dangerous bacteria that enter the body.



- When reheating solid foods that have been cooked and stored in the freezer or the refrigerator, the internal temperature of the food must reach 165 °F, as checked with a food thermometer, to ensure bacteria have been killed.
  - If using a microwave to reheat food, make sure that you stir or rotate the food during heating to produce an even heat.
  - Because microwaves produce hot and cold spots in foods, you must stir the food well after heating and check the temperature of the food in several spots.
  - After checking the temperature with a thermometer, allow the food to sit, covered, until it reaches an appropriate serving temperature.
  - Never defrost food at room temperature. There are three safe ways to defrost food: in the refrigerator, in cold water, and in the microwave. Food thawed in cold water or in the microwave should be cooked immediately.
  - Do not feed a baby directly from a container or jar of baby food. Otherwise, any leftover food will have to be discarded because it has been contaminated by the baby’s saliva. Instead, use a clean spoon to take out a portion of food and place it into a clean bowl to feed the baby.
- Heat only the portion of food removed from the jar.
  - Refrigerate un-served portions of baby food in the original container or jar at 40 °F or below after labeling the jar with the date it was opened.

