



Western Health
and Social Care Trust



Community Food
& Nutrition Team



Public Health
Agency

Project supported by the PHA

FOOD

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FREEZING



Click on this icon
throughout the
leaflet to find
more information.



Freezing is a great way of storing food. It can help you save time and money, extend the life of your food and reduce waste too.

Use Your Freezer to:

- **Help you get 5-A-Day** - frozen fruit and vegetables are nutritious, pre-prepared, can be added to lots of dishes, cook quickly and reduce waste as you only use the amount you need.
- **Take advantage of special offers, deals or end of day reductions** - freeze foods to keep them at their best for longer and eat at another time E.g. meat, fish, bread.
- **Cook once, eat twice (or thrice!)** - batch cook recipes or freeze leftovers for quick ready-meals straight from the freezer. See the freezer-friendly recipes opposite.

Will it Freeze?

Most foods can be frozen. Look at the table on the right to see what foods freeze well and those that cannot be frozen. Click on the link below for more information.



What can be Frozen

- Raw and cooked meat e.g. roasts, steaks, chops, mince, sausages
- Raw & cooked poultry e.g. Whole chicken/turkey, fillets, thighs
- Fish – raw and cooked
- Bread - e.g. slices, baps, pitta, bagels, wraps, scones, wheaten and pancakes
- Vegetables – raw or cooked e.g. carrots, broccoli
- Fruit – chopped raw or cooked e.g. banana, strawberries, stewed apple
- Homemade meals e.g. lasagne, chilli, casseroles, stews, curries
- Milk
- Soups
- Butter
- Raw eggs (Shell removed and beaten)
- Grated cheese
- Cakes and baked goods (without icing)

What Cannot be Frozen

- Previously frozen products
- Plain yoghurt, low-fat cream cheese, cottage cheese & single cream
- Fruit & vegetables with a high water content e.g. lettuce, tomatoes, watermelon
- Hard boiled eggs or eggs in their shell
- Sauces containing milk or cream

Do not refreeze food that has been defrosted.

Reheating means cooking again NOT just warming up.

Food should only be reheated ONCE.

How to Freeze Meals and Leftovers:

- Allow food to cool quickly (no more than two hours)
- Divide into realistic portions
- Place food in a sealed container or food bag
- Label as shown below:

Name of dish: Beef Casserole
Date: 01/01/2021
No. of portions: 2

Defrosting

- The safest place to defrost food is the fridge, ideally overnight.
- Thaw food completely making sure no frozen lumps are left.
- Store defrosted food in the fridge and use as soon as possible, preferably the next day.

Defrosting Using a Microwave

A microwave can be used to defrost food quickly. The rotation of the microwave thaws food evenly.

- Place the food in a microwave safe container and cover loosely.
- Set the microwave to the defrost setting and check food every 2 minutes.

Reheating

Defrosted food can be reheated in a saucepan, microwave or oven. If using a microwave, stir dishes half way through reheating to ensure the food is piping hot the whole way through. Leave food to stand for 1-2 minutes after microwaving to finish cooking.

Leek, Potato and Onion Soup

Serves 2-3

- 2 large leeks, trimmed and sliced**
- 25g low-fat spread / 1 tbsp oil**
- 1 small onion, chopped**
- 425ml vegetable stock**
- 2 small potatoes, peeled and diced**
- 125ml semi-skimmed milk**

Method

1. In a large saucepan gently melt the butter or heat 1 tbsp oil. Add leeks, onions and potatoes.
2. Stir well. Cover and allow to cook over a low heat for 15 minutes.
3. Add vegetable stock and milk. Simmer for 20 minutes until vegetables are soft.

Can be served chunky, or cooled slightly and blended until smooth.



Bolognese Sauce

Serves 4

500g beef mince

1 green pepper - deseeded and diced

1 tbsp olive oil

2-3 garlic cloves - peeled and crushed
(or 1 tsp garlic granules)

1 onion - peeled and chopped

400g tin chopped tomatoes

1 carrot - peeled and chopped

150mls beef stock

1 tbsp dried mixed herbs

Method

1. Heat frying pan and add beef mince. Cook over a high heat to colour.
2. Drain off any fat then remove mince from the pan and set aside.
3. Heat oil in the frying pan. Cook the onion, carrot and green pepper until soft.
4. Stir in garlic and herbs. Cook for two minutes.
5. Stir in tomatoes and beef stock.
6. Add the mince back to the pan and simmer for 30-40 minutes.

Serve with spaghetti or pasta shapes and a sprinkling of cheese.

Use this sauce to make a lasagne or add chilli powder/ flakes and a tin of kidney beans to make chilli con carne!

Make this recipe vegan or vegetarian by swapping:
Beef mince for Quorn mince or lentils and beef stock for vegetable stock.
(Start at step 3 then add Quorn/ lentils at step 6.)

tsp = teaspoon
tbsp = tablespoon