Follow these three easy-to-follow steps to properly cool your food, avoid bacteria and help you, your friends and family LiveSafer™.

**STEP 1**
Disperse the food into shallow containers. For example, use a 9” x 11” glass dish or similar shallow container (or containers) to pour the food into while it is still hot. Do not fill the container more than one to two inches high with food. Shallow dishes allow the food to spread out and cool while eliminating hot spots where bacteria can grow. Remember to stir the food while it is cooling to release heat where bacteria can grow.

**STEP 2**
Put the shallow containers in the freezer or refrigerator without a lid. The most important step of proper cooling is to get the food from its heated temperature to below 70° F (21° C) within two hours. Use an NSF International certified thermometer to test the temperature of the food during cooling and at the two-hour mark. The container should be open or loosely covered and vented to allow steam to escape. If the hot food did not cool down to 70° F (21° C) within the first two hours, you need to reheat it to 165° F (74 °C) and begin cooling it again starting with step 1.

**STEP 3**
Chill the food down to the proper cold storage temperature. Within the next four hours the food must be cooled from 70° F (21° C) to 41° F (5° C). Once the food is cooled to 41° F (5° C), you can transfer it to another container such as an NSF certified food-safe container with sealed lids to keep it fresh in the refrigerator.

Later, when removing your leftover food from the refrigerator, reheat it to 165° F (74˚ C) and keep it warm while serving or store within two hours.

The temperature danger zone for food is between 41° F and 135˚ F. Use your certified thermometer, not your eyes, to check food temperatures.

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For more information on food safety, contact our consumer information hotline 1.800.673.8010 or by email [info@nsf.org](mailto:info@nsf.org).