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Red Meat Safety Factsheet

1. Storing Red Meat

- **Refrigerate Immediately**: As soon as you get home, place red meat in the refrigerator. It should be kept at or below 4°C (40°F) to prevent bacterial growth. Use the coldest part of the fridge, usually the bottom shelf.
- **Use or Freeze**: Fresh meat should be used within 1-2 days. If you're not planning to use it within this time frame, freeze it. Frozen meat can last up to 6 months. Label packages with the date to keep track of storage times.
- **Prevent Cross-Contamination**: Store meat in a sealed container or on a plate to prevent juices from dripping onto other foods. Place it on the bottom shelf to avoid contaminating other items.

2. Preparing Red Meat

- **Clean Hands and Surfaces**: Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after handling raw meat. Clean all surfaces, cutting boards, and utensils with hot, soapy water. Consider using a disinfectant for added safety.
- **Separate Cutting Boards**: Use one cutting board for raw meat and another for fruits and vegetables to prevent cross-contamination. Color-coded cutting boards can help keep things organized.
- **Thawing Safely**: Thaw meat in the refrigerator, not on the counter, to keep it at a safe temperature. If you need to thaw it quickly, use the microwave or place it in a sealed plastic bag and submerge it in cold water, changing the water every 30 minutes. Never thaw meat in hot water.

3. Cooking Red Meat

- **Cook Thoroughly**: Use a meat thermometer to ensure meat is cooked to a safe internal temperature. Insert the thermometer into the thickest part of the meat, avoiding bone, fat, or gristle:
  - **Beef, Pork, Lamb**:
    - Medium-rare: 63°C (145°F) and let rest for at least 3 minutes
    - Medium: 71°C (160°F)
    - Well-done: 77°C (170°F)
- **Avoid Cross-Contamination**: Use clean utensils and plates for cooked meat. Never place cooked meat back on the same plate that held raw meat. Wash any utensils or plates that have come into contact with raw meat before reusing them.
- **Rest Meat**: After cooking, let meat rest for a few minutes. This allows the juices to redistribute, making the meat more flavorful and easier to cut. Cover loosely with foil to keep it warm.

Additional Tips

- **Marinating**: Always marinate meat in the refrigerator, not on the counter. Discard any leftover marinade that has come into contact with raw meat, or boil it before using it as a sauce.
- **Leftovers**: Store leftovers in shallow containers and refrigerate within 2 hours of cooking. Use leftovers within 3-4 days, or freeze them for longer storage.
- **Hygiene**: Regularly clean your refrigerator and kitchen surfaces to maintain a hygienic environment. Use a solution of 1 tablespoon of unscented liquid chlorine bleach per gallon of water to sanitize surfaces.

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