

Fact Sheet: Cooling

The purpose of this fact sheet is to provide information regarding best cooling practices. Please refer to the [2009 FDA Food Code Chapter 3-501.14](#) & [3-501.15](#) for complete Cooling Limits and Methods.

Rapid cooling is essential to the prevention of foodborne illness.

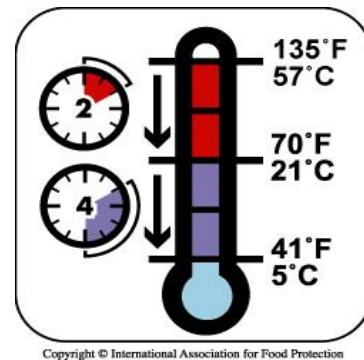
Two-Stage Cooling Method

The two stage cooling method reduces the cooked food's internal temperature in two steps:

- **From 135°F to 70°F:**
within two hours of preparation, and
- **From 70°F to 41°F:**
within four hours

Total cooling time should never exceed six hours.

Bacteria grow rapidly in the DANGER ZONE between 41°F and 135°F. To facilitate a **RAPID COOL** through the DANGER ZONE, it is **required** that you use proper cooling methods.



Foods prepared from ambient temperature ingredients, such as tuna salad, must be cooled to 41°F or below within four hours of preparation.

APPROVED COOLING METHODS :

- ✓ Ice bath (stir frequently)
- ✓ Ice wands
- ✓ Smaller portions (cut or separate foods into small portions to cool faster)
- ✓ Shallow pans (2 or 4-inch pans are recommended)
- ✓ Metal pans rather than plastic
- ✓ Uncover or loosely cover to allow ventilation of warm/hot foods
- ✓ Use rapid cooling equipment (ex: blast chiller)