



DRUG & GIFT SHOP
444 So. Flower, Ste 100
Los Angeles, Ca 90071
213-612-4300
www.uptowndrugs.com

Uptown
Downtown

Eat or Toss?

How long to keep what's in your cupboards, fridge, and freezer

It smells okay. You don't see any fuzz on it. So what if that bottle of barbecue sauce has been sitting in the back of your fridge since July 4, 2003? And that frost-covered lamb chop that's been chilling in your freezer since last year—it's still good, right?

There's always going to be something of indeterminate age in your kitchen, and you may be tempted to sniff, poke, and then taste it. But not so fast—you could be taking a risk you'll regret. Each year, 76 million Americans fall sick with food-borne illnesses and 5,000 die of them, estimates the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Many of those illnesses are a result of improper food handling at home, which includes eating food that has spent too much time on the refrigerator shelf. The fridge isn't the only problem spot, either. Food that's been in the freezer too long won't make you sick, but it certainly won't taste its best. And though canned and dried foods that are past their prime usually aren't a threat, they will lose nutritional value over time. (Eating food from a bulging can, however, could be potentially fatal because the swelling could signal bacterial contamination.)

You can't count on sight or smell to tell you if food is safe or good to eat," says Elizabeth L. Andress, PhD, a food safety specialist at the University of Georgia. Pregnant women, young children, the elderly, and those with compromised immune systems are particularly vulnerable to food poisoning, which can cause nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fever, and body aches.

So skip the smell-prod-and taste test, and follow our guide.

Food in the fridge

If a few items in your refrigerator have been there since the last millennium, you're not alone: When

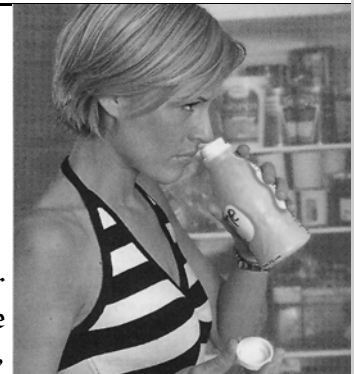
Tennessee State University researchers peeked into the fridges in 210 homes, they found moldy, spoiled, or outdated foods inside 24% of them.

"Many consumers don't understand that while refrigeration slows bacterial growth, it doesn't stop it," says Janet B. Anderson, RD, a clinical professor of nutrition and food sciences at Utah State University, who, when conducting a recent study, was horrified to find that 31% of respondents ate leftovers that were more than a week old.

The first step to ensuring the safety of your food supply is keeping track of when you purchased and opened each item. One easy way is to stash masking tape and a marking pen in the kitchen so you can label all edibles with "purchased on" and "opened on" dates. The next step is to pay close attention to the recommended storage times. (See "How Long Will It Last?" on the back page and check out www.fightbac.org for additional information.) But be warned: these are based on refrigerator temperatures of 40°F and lower; anything warmer than that is a breeding ground for bacteria. In the Tennessee State study, an alarming 28% of the refrigerators were warmer than 40°F. (For less than \$12, you can buy a refrigerator thermometer that will help you keep food at the optimal temperature.)

Some refrigerated foods have expiration dates on their

(Continued on page 4)





Let's Talk

Dr. Christine Gonzales

Now that we are transitioning into fall, we would like to announce some new services available here at Uptown Drugs. As the staff Integrative Pharmacist, I believe in combining the best of conventional and alterna-

tive options to help you on your path towards true wellness. So I came up with some great ways to help support you, our valued customers. The new services will include community outreach talks and presentations, complimentary brown bag medication and supplement review, and mini-nutritional consults on common health concerns. Let me explain a little bit more because I'm really excited about this...

I am available to come out to your office, apartment building, gym, or church in the downtown area for groups of 10 or more to give talks on topics such as fish oils, pain relief options, stress and exhaustion, balancing female hormones, healthy travel, multivitamins, and calcium. These talks usually last less than an hour and are an excellent opportunity to pick my brain and learn some important health information from a credible source. Plus, it gets me out of the pharmacy and into the community where I love to be! I require only a week's notice to book a talk and this is a complimentary service to help educate and empower you.

The brown bag medication and supplement review is another great complimentary service. Basically, it is a quick review of all the prescription medications, over-the-counter medications, and supplements you currently take. You would literally put them all into a bag and bring them to me. During this 15 minute session, I will go through and alert you of any potential problems with your current regimen. I find it increasingly common for people to mix potentially harmful combinations of medications or supplements. This is basically my way to make sure you are taking a safe and effective regimen. You must make an appointment because I only have a few time slots available per week on most Thursday from 11am-1pm.

Lastly, the mini-nutritional consults will be half hour sessions targeted at providing solutions for a nagging health concern. At this time, digestive health is the only topic available. Over the next coming months, I will have programs on pain, urinary health, stress, and cholesterol. During this half hour session, you will get specific solutions and strategies to manage this health concern. I will also give you recommendations on any supplements to consider. And the best part is this service is available for only \$25, our special introductory rate! You must also make an appointment for

this service.

And there you have it! There are lots of exciting new things going on here at Uptown. The community talks and presentations, brown bag review, and mini-nutritional consults must be booked in advance and remember that the first two are complimentary. Why not take advantage of this great opportunity? Feel free to call, email, or stop by for more information. Just let us know how we can help you with your wellness. After all, that's what we're here for! You can contact me at the pharmacy at (213) 612-4300 or by email at christine@christinegonzalez.com.

Schedule Your Flu Shots

At the end of September, Uptown Drug began administering flu shots to its patrons. Don't wait until it is too late!



If your office has 10 or more interested in getting the shots, we will come to your office.

**Call now for an appointment:
213-612-4300**

Common Medication Mistakes

Many people unknowingly decrease the effectiveness of the drugs they take--or worse, cause themselves significant harm--by mismanaging their pills.

MISTAKE #4:

COMBINING PRESCRIPTION AND NONPRESCRIPTION DRUGS

In recent years, several drugs that used to be available only by prescription have gone on sale over-the-counter (OTC). This cuts costs for consumers, but it makes it harder for doctors to monitor their patients for potentially dangerous drug combinations.

Example 1: In rare cases, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen (Motrin), naproxen (Aleve) and ketoprofen (Orudis), can cause kidney damage. If you have kidney disease, avoid high doses. Do not take them on a long-term basis.

Example 2: The acid blocker cimetidine (Tagamet) interacts with the antidiabetes medication sulfonylurea benzodiazepine tranquilizers like Valium...and calcium channel blockers like Adalat and Procardia.

Self-defense: If you're taking a medication on a long-term basis, ask your doctor if any OTC drugs interact with it.

Or—buy your OTC drugs where you have your prescriptions filled, and check with your pharmacist before taking the two together.



Hints from JoAnn

- Fruit Freshener - Use 2 vitamin C tablets in a big bowl of water...let them dissolve and stir...dunk any veggie or fruit and it will stay fresh for a couple of weeks and vitamin C won't hurt you either! Try it out on a potato... dunk the potato and leave it out on the sink...it won't discolor... It's the short version of "fruit fresh".
- Cottage cheese will remain fresher longer if you store it upside down in the refrigerator. This slows the effects of oxidation.
- To keep milk past its expiration date, add salt. A pinch of salt in a gallon will do it. The salt slows the rate of bacteria growth.
- Brown sugar will not harden if stored in the freezer.
- Ice cream container sealed in a plastic bag will stop ice crystals from forming when it is in the freezer.

- Potato chip bag open again and they're all stale and yucky?? Pop them in the microwave for 30 to 60 seconds, let stand for two minutes and they'll be crispy again.
- Regarding tomato paste, it seems a whole can of tomato paste is many times too much for some recipes. Suggestion: take a piece of waxed paper, put it on a cookie sheet and putting teaspoonfuls of the leftover paste on the paper -- another sheet on top and freeze. When frozen just peel them off and put them in a baggie. When you need a tsp. or tbs. of paste you have it without opening a whole can and there is no waste. OR--put small amounts in an ice cube tray and then just pop them out when needed.
- Storing Cake -- If you store half an apple in the container which you are storing a cake, the cake will retain its freshness.
- Dropping Cookie Dough -- To get cookie dough to drop without sticking dip the spoon in milk first.
- Measuring Honey -- Measuring honey with a spoon is easy but getting it all off the spoon is another matter--so first rub the spoon with margarine.

BEWARE!

Energy drinks can raise blood pressure, cause faster heartbeat and lead to irritability, nervousness and nausea. Many contain as much caffeine as one or two cups of coffee and as much sugar as one can of soda. Some also include herbal stimulants. An occasional energy drink may be a useful Stimulant-but regularly drinking several energy drinks a day can damage health. Also: It is dangerous to consume energy drinks with alcohol or when you are dehydrated. The caffeine and other ingredients can increase risk for fainting and even a heart attack.

Email

A free E-mail account at www.bigstring.com lets you send E-mail that can be easily recalled, is hard to forward, nonprintable, self-destructing and more. It is a great way to keep control over E-mailed personal or business information. Basic accounts are free and come with unlimited E-mail storage and the ability to send five-minute videos.



Your husband is suffering from a very severe stress disorder. If you don't do the following he will surely die. Each morning fix him a healthy breakfast. Be pleasant at all times. For lunch make him a nutritious meal. For dinner prepare an especially nice meal. No chores. No nagging. Oh yes, and make love several times a week. Do this for the next year and he'll regain his health completely!



What did the doctor say?



(Continued from page 1)

packages. But dating regulations vary from state to state, and many products come with no date at all. To avoid confusion—and possibly food poisoning—use the rules of thumb in “How Long Will It Last”.

Food in the Freezer

As long as food remains frozen, it will stay safe to eat. The flavor and texture, however, can deteriorate substantially over time, so you may want to think twice before serving your dinner guests that 2-year-old sirloin. Also keep in mind that freezing doesn't kill bacteria; it just puts them to sleep for a while. Once you thaw it out, follow the guidelines for refrigerated food.

Like refrigerator temperatures, freezer temperatures can vary. The recommended storage periods assume that your freezer is set at 0°F. For every 5-degree increase in temperature, you should cut storage time in half. An important caveat: If you have the type of refrigerator with a small freezer compartment inside (one that doesn't have its own exterior door), don't keep anything in it longer than a

week because these freezers cannot maintain temperatures as low as 0° F.

Food in the Pantry

Because pasta, rice, and other dried foods don't contain enough moisture for bacteria to thrive, and canned food is airtight, pantry storage is also more a question of quality than safety. Toss any cans that are rusting, leaking, or bulging, and always put newly purchased items on the back of the shelf, so you use the oldest ones first. Then follow the rules in “How Long Will It Last?” (Unless otherwise noted, they apply to opened products that are kept in airtight containers after opening.)

No matter how fastidious you are, there's always going to be something that slips through your dating system or doesn't appear on any of the lists. In that case, remember this mantra: When in doubt, throw it out.

How long will it last?

Fridge

Raw poultry and ground meat. Eat or freeze within 1 - 2 days.

Leftovers. 3 - 4 days; with gravy, 1 - 2 days.

Raw beef, pork, veal, and lamb. Eat or freeze within 3 - 5 days

Lunch meat. Opened, 3 - 5 days; unopened, 2 weeks

Hard cheese. Opened, 3 - 4 weeks; unopened, up to 6 mos.

Soft cheese. 1 week

Condiments. Up to 6 mos.

Freezer

Ice cream. 2 - 4 mos.

Cooked meat. 3 - 4 months poultry, pork up to 12 mos.

Raw beef. Ground 3 - 4 months; steaks/roasts, up to 12 mos.

Vegetables and fruits. Up to 12 mos.

Pantry

Oils. Opened, 1 - 3 months; unopened, 6 mos.

Vanilla and other extracts. Opened, 12 months; unopened, 2 years

Spices and herbs. Herbs and ground spices, 6 months; whole spices, 2 years

Baking powder. 3 months

Baking soda, sugar, bouillon, pasta, rice. 12 mos.

Canned soups, stews, meats. Unopened, 2 - 5 years

Uptown Pharmacy



Tired of waiting for your prescription? We offer quick convenient and friendly service.

We can handle all of your FSA/HSA needs electronically.



Phone, FAX or bring in your prescription.

Tel: 213-612-4300

Fax: 213-612-4313

Delivery available

