

## **Food Safety for Older Adults**

As we age, it is normal for our bodies not to work as well as they did when we were younger! Between 50 and 60, the immune system in most people begins to decline. After age 75, many adults have an immune system weakened that they're at higher risk for contracting a food borne illnesses. People 65 and older are at a higher risk for hospitalization and death from foodborne illness. This increased risk is because organs and body systems change as the body ages.

These changes include:

- The digestive system holds food longer, allowing bacteria to grow.
- The liver and kidneys may not properly rid our bodies of foreign bacteria and toxins.
- The stomach may not produce enough acid. Without proper amounts of acid, there is an increased risk of bacterial growth.
- Underlying chronic conditions, such as diabetes and kidney disease, may also increase a person's risk of foodborne illness.

### **Tips for Safe Transporting of Your Groceries:**

- Pick up perishable foods last, and plan to go directly home from the grocery store.
- Always refrigerate perishable foods within 2 hours.
- Refrigerate within 1 hour if the temperature outside is above 90°F.
- In hot weather, take a cooler with ice or another cold source to transport foods safely.

### **Tips for Keeping Food Safe:**

- Keep cold food cold, at 40 °F or below the entire transport time. To be safest, place cold food in a cooler with plenty of ice or frozen gel packs.
- Hot food should be kept hot at 140 °F or above. Wrap the food well and place in an insulated container.

### **Four Basic Steps for Food Safety**

1. **CLEAN**: Wash hands and food preparation surfaces often.
2. **SEPARATE**: Don't cross-contaminate.  
Cross-contamination occurs when bacteria are spread from one food product to another. Use separate cutting boards and knives when handling raw meat, poultry, fish, etc and ready to eat foods.
3. **Cook**: Cook to a safe temperature.

You can't tell by *looking*. Use a **food thermometer** to be sure.

### USDA Recommended Safe Minimum Internal Temperatures



Beef, Veal, Lamb Steaks & Roasts	Fish	Pork	Beef, Veal, Lamb Ground	Egg Dishes	Turkey, Chicken & Duck Whole, Pieces & Ground
<b>145 °F</b>	<b>145 °F</b>	<b>160 °F</b>	<b>160 °F</b>	<b>160 °F</b>	<b>165 °F</b>

#### 4. **CHILL:** Refrigerate promptly

Refrigerate or freeze perishable foods within 2 hours of cooking or purchasing. If outside temperature 90 plus degrees, refrigerate within 1 hour.

References: [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel), [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov) 2, <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/food-safety/safe-food-handling-and-preparation>, <https://www.fda.gov/media/83744>, <https://manitobaflax.com/blueberry-flaxseed-crumble/>

### **Blueberry Flaxseed Crumble**

#### Blueberry Filling

7 cups blueberries  
1 tsp lemon zest  
Juice of 1 large lemon  
1 Tbsp flaxseed meal  
2 tbsp sugar  
Pinch of salt

#### Crumble Topping

1 1/4 cup of old fashioned oats  
1/2 cup flaxseed meal  
1/4 cup brown sugar  
1/8 tsp salt 1/2 tsp cinnamon  
4 Tbsp butter, softened  
1/3 heaping cup sliced almonds (optional)

Preheat oven to 350-degree Fahrenheit and grease pie plate. Combine ingredients for the filling, pour into prepared pie plate. In a small mixing bowl, combine topping ingredients. Sprinkle on top of the blueberry filling. Bake for 40 minutes or until blueberries begin to bubble. Serve with ice cream or whipped topping.

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