Ready-to-eat fresh foods can help you save time preparing meals. But some of these foods present a high risk for foodborne illness. Here are some tips for keeping ready-to-eat foods safe.

**At the grocery store, choose ready-to-eat fresh foods that are:**
- Packaged well
- Clean

**At home, ready-to-eat fresh food should be:**
- Stored at the right temperature—either refrigerated or heated
- Kept at the right temperature – either refrigerated or heated
- Eaten as soon as possible
- Dated when you open it
- Thrown out three days after you open it

**High-Risk Foods**
These ready-to-eat foods have a high risk of causing foodborne illness:
- Soft cheeses such as brie, feta, ricotta, blue-veined, and Mexican-style soft cheeses such as queso fresco (unless it is made with pasteurized milk)
- Raw, unpasteurized milk

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• Soft-serve ice cream

• Hot dogs, luncheon meats, cold cuts—unless they have been reheated to steaming temperatures

• Pâtés/meat spreads—unless canned

• Precooked chicken

• Refrigerated smoked seafood products—unless reheated to steaming temperatures

• Deli-type salads (such as coleslaw)

• Pre-packed raw vegetables and mixed raw vegetable salad

• Pre-cut fresh fruits and fruit salads