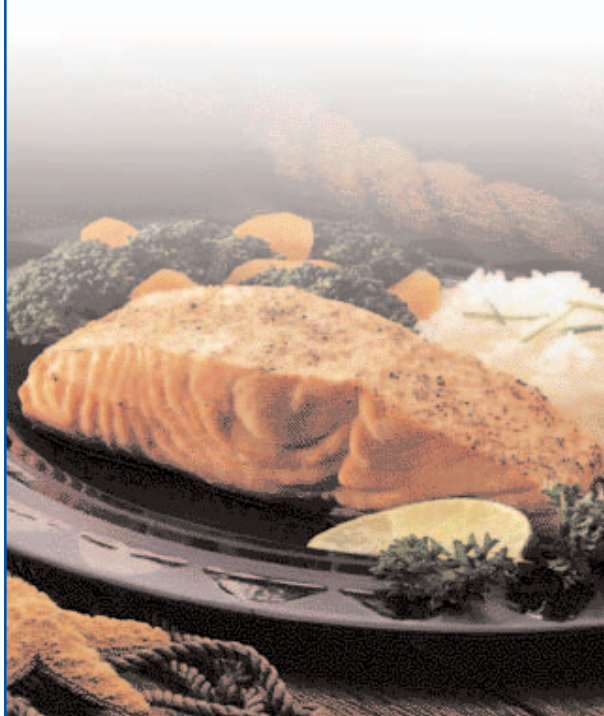


## Fish and Shellfish Storage Chart

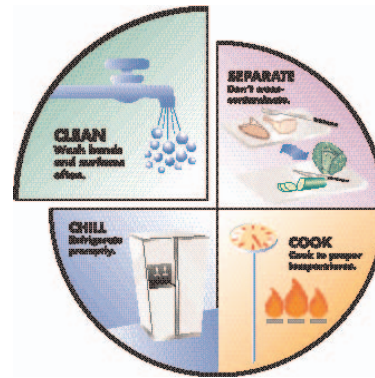
| Product                                                               | Refrigerated                            | Frozen                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>FRESH FISH</b>                                                     |                                         |                            |
| Lean fish                                                             | 1-2 days                                | 6 months                   |
| Fatty fish                                                            | 1-2 days                                | 2-3 months                 |
| Caviar, fresh, non-pasteurized                                        | 6 months unopened; 2 days after opening | Don't freeze               |
| Caviar, pasteurized, vacuum packaged                                  | 1 year unopened; 2 days after opening   | Don't freeze               |
| Cooked fish                                                           | 3-4 days                                | 4-6 months                 |
| <b>SMOKED FISH</b>                                                    | 14 days or date on vacuum package       | 2 months in vacuum package |
| <b>FRESH SHELLFISH</b>                                                |                                         |                            |
| Shrimp, scallops, crayfish, squid, shucked clams, mussels and oysters | 1-2 days                                | 3-6 months                 |
| Live in shell                                                         | 2-3 days                                | 2-3 months                 |
| <b>CANNED SEAFOOD</b>                                                 |                                         |                            |
| Pantry 5 years                                                        | After opening, 3 to 4 days              | Out of can, 2 months       |

*Note: Storage times are from date of purchase. If products bear a use-by date, observe it. It is not important if a date expires after food is frozen.*



## Consumer Tips

- When shopping, pick up meat, poultry, seafood, dairy and other refrigerated or frozen items last.
- Always keep cold foods cold (40° F or below) and hot foods hot (140° F and above).
- Never keep perishable foods at room temperature for longer than two hours — including time to prepare, serve and eat.
- Store seafood in the coldest part of the refrigerator.
- Wash hands thoroughly with hot soapy water before and after handling any raw seafood.



### For more food safety information:

Call the USDA's meat and poultry hotline toll-free at (800) 535-4555 or the FDA's food information line toll-free at (888) SAFEFOOD

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## A Consumer Guide to Food Quality & Safe Handling



## The Supermarket Seafood Case

We maintain rigid quality assurance and sanitation standards to ensure that you always receive fresh, wholesome seafood. However, after you purchase the food, it's up to you to take care of it. This is important because a large number of foodborne illnesses are caused by improper handling of perishable foods in the home.

Most cases of food poisoning are caused by pathogenic (disease causing) microorganisms, parasites or viruses. However, not all microorganisms cause food poisoning. Some bacteria, yeasts and molds are used in food production. Others are food spoilage microorganisms which cause foods to turn bad.

Bacteria are a natural part of our environment. Where there is food there may be bacteria. Proper food handling and cooking are the best ways to prevent foodborne illness. Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish or eggs may increase the risk of foodborne illness, especially for children, the elderly, pregnant women and those who have chronic illnesses or weakened immune systems.



## Purchasing Seafood

### Fresh Fish

- Fresh fish smells like a fresh sea breeze. If it smells “fishy,” don’t buy it!
- Eyes should be bright, clear and shiny.
- Scales should be shiny and cling tightly to the skin. Gills should be bright pink or red.
- Steaks and fillets should be moist with no drying or browning around the edges.

### Frozen Fish

- Make sure the packages are undamaged.
- Frozen fish should not be freezer burned, off-color, partially thawed or covered with ice crystals.

### Fresh Shellfish

- Shrimp and freshly-shucked scallops and oysters should have a fresh odor.
- A clear, slightly milky or light grey liquid should surround freshly shucked oysters.
- Only buy fresh shellfish that are alive. Shells of live clams, mussels and oysters will close tightly when tapped.
- Live crabs and lobsters will show some leg movement. Live lobsters will curl their tails tightly beneath them when handled.

### Frozen Shellfish

- Be sure that shellfish are packed in close-fitting, moisture-proof containers.
- Buy solidly frozen prepared items, such as crab cakes or breaded shrimp, with no freezer burn or unpleasant odor.

## Storing Seafood

### Fresh Fish

- Store fresh fish in its original wrapper.
- Keep it in the coldest part of the refrigerator (40° F or slightly below), which is usually under the freezer or in the “meat drawer.”
- Cook fresh fish within one to two days.
- Never refreeze previously frozen products.

### Fresh Shellfish

- Live shellfish should be refrigerated in containers covered with clean, damp cloths—not airtight lids. Discard shellfish that have died.
- Live mussels, oysters and clams may open their shells even in the refrigerator. Give them a tap; they will close if alive. If not, discard.
- Cook fresh shellfish within one to two days.

### Frozen Fish and Shellfish

- Frozen fish and shellfish should be used within three to six months. The longer these foods are frozen, the more likely they are to lose flavor, texture and moisture.

### Canned Fish or Shellfish

- Never buy or use dented, bulging, rusted or leaking containers.
- Store canned seafood in a cool, dry place.
- Observe the “use-by” date on pasteurized products which are stored in the refrigerator such as crabmeat.

## Preparing Seafood

- Defrost seafood in the refrigerator, in cold running water in airtight packaging, or in the microwave. Never thaw at room temperature. Cook microwave-thawed seafood immediately.
- Rinse seafood in cold running water to help remove any surface bacteria.
- Marinate seafood in the refrigerator.
- Avoid cross-contamination! Never allow cooked or prepared foods to come in contact with raw, perishable foods.

## Cooking Seafood

- Cooked fish should be opaque and flake easily when tested with a fork.
- Raw shrimp should turn pink and firm when done. Depending on the size, it takes from three to five minutes to boil or steam one pound of medium-sized shrimp in the shell.
- Shucked shellfish such as clams, mussels and oysters become plump and opaque when ready for eating. The edges of the oysters start to curl. Overcooking causes them to shrink.
- Clams, mussels and oysters in the shell should open. Remove them as they open and continue cooking until all are done.
- Scallops turn milky white or opaque and firm. Scallops take three to four minutes to cook through, depending on the size.
- Boiled lobster turns bright red. Allow five to six minutes per pound, starting the timer when the water comes back to a boil.