

Food Safety

is a shared responsibility

Germs can get into our food at any point in the food chain - from the time it is produced to the moment it is put on our table to eat.

All of us are part of this food chain. We handle and consume food in one way or another. As such, the assurance of food safety is a shared responsibility.

AVA is our food safety champion

As the national food safety authority, AVA regulates the safety of food, from production or point of import to just before they enter the retail chain.

It has put in place a comprehensive and integrated food safety system that includes accreditation of source farms, import control, inspection, sampling and analysis as well as source tracing to ensure that all food that comes into Singapore comply with our stringent food safety standards and requirements.

The role of the food industry

Food manufacturers, importers and distributors in Singapore have to maintain a high standard of food safety by complying with the stringent requirements of AVA.

Responsible food industry players also incorporate food safety assurance programmes and hygienic practices in their operations.

The role of consumers

As a consumer, you have direct control over the safety of the food you consume. You can practice food safety by learning of food safety risks and safe food practices to avoid these risks.

By taking appropriate actions, you can play a part in protecting your own well-being and the well-being of your family.



**TOGETHER,
LET'S KEEP
FOOD SAFE!**



**Together
Let's Keep
Food
Safe!**



The Food Safety Otter



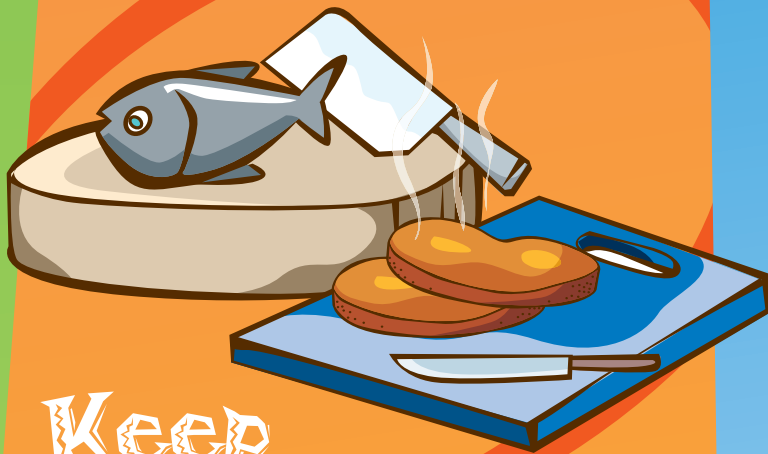
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SEAFOOD





Keep Seafood Safe!

Singaporeans consume an average of 100,000 tonnes of seafood each year. While seafood is generally safe to eat, we can still take measures to minimise food safety risks through careful selection and handling.

Eating raw seafood instead of cooked seafood can make us more prone to food poisoning. As such those with poor immune systems should avoid taking raw or partially cooked seafood.

Big fishes, especially those higher in the food chain, may have higher mercury content. Such fishes can accumulate methylmercury in their flesh, which can affect an unborn child's nervous system. Expectant mothers and young children, who are more susceptible to the harmful effects of methylmercury, are advised to eat such seafood in moderate quantities and to maintain a balanced diet.

The following tips will enable you to enjoy safe seafood all year round.

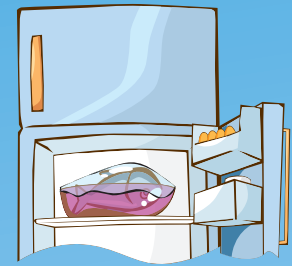
Buying seafood

- o Buy seafood that is properly iced or refrigerated.
- o Select packaged seafood before its expiry date and check that packages are not torn.
- o Fresh seafood should not have excess liquid when packaged.
- o Avoid seafood that has a strong ammonia smell. Dead shellfish is not edible and should be avoided.
- o When buying fish, choose those that are shiny, bright, and with scales intact. Fresh fish should have bright, clear and full eyes and firm flesh. Fish gills should be red to liver-red and free from slime.

Storing seafood

- o Follow the recommended safe handling and storage information on the packages if any.
- o Wash and dry fresh seafood before placing them in clean plastic bags or containers for storage.
- o If you need to freeze the seafood, divide into portions based on your normal serving size.
- o Ensure that there is sufficient space in between items placed in the refrigerator or freezer so that cold air can circulate freely.
- o Do not open refrigerator or freezer doors more often than necessary to avoid temperature fluctuation.
- o When storing or thawing out seafood in the refrigerator, place the seafood in containers or trays to prevent the juices from contaminating other food.
- o Do not re-freeze seafood that has been completely thawed.
- o Do not overstock your seafood supply. Follow the rule of first in / first out, i.e. use older stock first.
- o Store live oysters, clams and mussels in the refrigerator. Keep them damp, but do not place on ice, or let them come in contact with fresh water. Do not place them in airtight containers.
- o Wash and refrigerate freshly sucked oysters, scallops and clams in individual containers. For best quality, they should be eaten immediately.

Handling seafood



- o Handle seafood with care. Bruises and punctures in seafood make them spoil more rapidly.
- o Thaw seafood safely in the refrigerator or use the microwave oven.
- o Separate raw seafood from cooked or ready-to-eat food to avoid cross-contamination.
- o Thoroughly wash knives, containers and cutting boards before and after handling raw seafood.
- o Scrub and clean the shells of scallops, mussels, clams or oysters under cold water before opening or cooking them in the shell.
- o Always cook seafood thoroughly until it is opaque and flaky.
- o Cook seafood well to kill viruses and bacteria.

Your Storage Guide for Seafood

PRODUCT	REFRIGERATOR (4°C)	FREEZER (-18°C)
Chilled Seafood		
Fish	1 - 2 days	2 - 4 months
Clams, Mussels, Oysters and Squids	1 - 2 days	3 - 4 months
Crabs, Crayfish, Prawns, Lobsters	2 - 3 days	2 - 3 months
Cooked Prawns and Mussels	3 - 4 days	2 - 3 months
Fishballs and Yong Tau Foo		
– pre-packed	Use by date	Do not freeze
– loose	1 - 2 days	Do not freeze
Frozen Seafood		
Fish	1 - 2 days	3 - 6 months
Prawns	1 - 2 days	9 - 12 months
Oyster		
– shucked	1 - 2 days	3 - 4 months
– shelled	1 - 2 days	2 - 3 months
Fishballs (cooked)	3 - 5 days	Use by date