Understanding Thawing: 3 Easy Ways to Safely Defrost Frozen Food

**Refrigerator Thawing**
- Refrigerator thawing takes time, so plan ahead!
- Parts of your fridge may be cooler than others, causing your food to thaw slower.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>After refrigerator thawing, cook or refreeze food within:</th>
<th>1-2 days if it is</th>
<th>3-5 days if it is</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ground meat</td>
<td>• a cut of beef</td>
<td>• a cut of beef</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stew meat</td>
<td>• a cut of pork</td>
<td>• a cut of pork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poultry</td>
<td>• a cut of lamb</td>
<td>• a cut of lamb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seafood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Large frozen foods require 24 hours per 5 pounds
- Small 1-pound packages require 1 full day

**Cold Water Thawing**
- Takes less time than the fridge, but requires more attention!
- You MUST cook thawed food immediately after cold water thawing!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How long should it thaw?</th>
<th>1 pound.................1 hour or less</th>
<th>4 - 12 pounds........2 - 6 hours</th>
<th>12 - 16 pounds........6 - 8 hours</th>
<th>16 - 22 pounds........10 - 12 hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- Replace water every 30 minutes!
- Seal in a leak proof package or plastic bag and completely submerge in cold water!

**Microwave Thawing**
- Plan to cook immediately if you use microwave thawing!
- Why? Parts of the food may begin to cook and enter the temperature danger zone! This makes it more susceptible to bacterial growth!

- Packaging can melt! Remove meat from its package and foam tray, and place into a microwavable container before thawing.
- Use the weight listed on the package to get an accurate defrost time!

**DO NOT THAW:**
- On the counter
- In hot water
- In the dishwasher
- In the bathtub
- Outdoors

**ENTERS Temperature Danger Zone 40-140 °F**

**Cook food without thawing!**
- It is safe!
- Food takes 50% longer to cook if it is not thawed!

Frozen vegetables and fruits are often cooked without thawing!