

# Fight the Burn, not the Freezer!

**F**reezer burn develops due to either improper storage or the length of time left in the freezer. If improperly stored, some of the water that makes up the food turns into ice when combined with oxygen. Although the food is still safe to eat, the areas that have freezer burn tend to be drier and less tasty because moisture was released.

Unless you are planning on cooking and eating the frozen items in the next month or two, be sure to package your food well. The average time you should store food in the freezer is between 4-12 months; beyond this time, the food begins to decline in quality. Leftovers can be frozen up to 1-3 months.

## Tips to Help Prevent Freezer Burn:

1. Wrap your food tightly; any air will cause freezer burn. As an extra layer of caution, use aluminum foil or freezer paper and label with the date you put in the freezer. Sturdy zippered plastic bags also work.
2. Allow food to cool before freezing. Freezing food while still warm or hot will cause steam and then ice crystals to form.
3. Keep your freezer temperature at or below 0 degrees F. If your food begins to melt, water will form and create freezer burn.
4. Don't overstuff your refrigerator — it can raise the temperature.

## How to Prepare Food Already Freezer Burnt:

1. Do not microwave the food. Microwaves heat water molecules inside the food. Because the water is outside of the surface, this will dry out the food even more. Instead cook the food over the stovetop.
2. Cut off as much of the freezer burn as possible.
3. If the whole food is freezer burned, try adding sauce to the meal.

## Clatsop & Tillamook Counties Dining Site Schedules

### SENIOR HELPLINE

(800) 584-9712

### CLATSOP COUNTY

#### Seaside

Bob Chisholm  
Community Center  
Monday - Friday  
(503) 738-9323

#### Svensen

Wickiup Grange Hall  
Wednesday & Thursday  
(503) 458-6888

### TILLAMOOK COUNTY

#### Nehalem

United Methodist Church  
10th & "A" Street  
Tuesday & Thursday  
(503) 368-3622

#### Pacific City

Kiawanda  
Community Center  
34600 Cape Kiwanda Drive  
Monday - Friday  
(503) 965-7900

#### Tillamook

Tillamook Senior Center  
316 Stillwell  
Monday - Friday  
(503) 842-9660