Fact or Myth? Chicken is safe if the juices are running clear. Burgers are safe if all the pink is gone.

MYTH.

Color is not an indicator of safety. The only way to ensure that food has been cooked for safety is to use a digital thermometer to measure temperatures.

Cooking Tip: Let it rest. After food is removed from heat, the temperature will stay constant or continue to rise, destroying harmful germs.

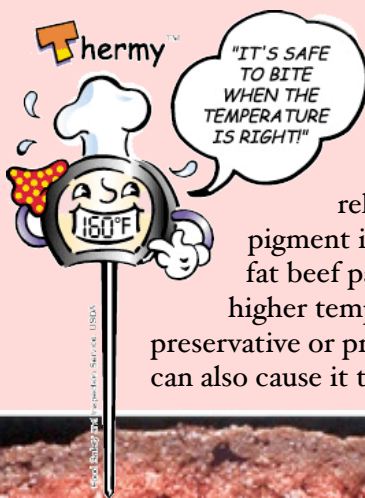## Color, Temperature, and "Doneness"

Poultry: Can be tan or pink at a safe temperature. Chemical changes can cause chicken to still be pink at 165 F. Oven gases, smoking or grilling the meat, and added nitrates or nitrites can also contribute to the pink color. A pink color is more pronounced in younger birds with thin skin.

Ground beef: Can be pink, red, or gray/brown at a safe temperature. It can turn brown before reaching 160 F if the meat was ground from the carcass of an older animal, stored for long periods of time, stored above proper temperatures, or is exposed to too much air. Fix this by wrapping ground beef tightly and either freezing or storing for no longer than 2 days at 40 F. Being pink after reaching 160 F is related to the pH, the concentration of pigment in the meat, and the amount of fat. Lower fat beef patties require longer cooking times and higher temperatures. Nitrates, whether added as a preservative or present in vegetables cooked with the meat can also cause it to stay pink.

Did You Know? **1 out of every 4** hamburgers turns brown <u>before</u> it reaches a safe internal temperature.

Thermy™

"IT'S SAFE TO BITE WHEN THE TEMPERATURE IS RIGHT!"

This **IS** a safely cooked hamburger, cooked to an internal temperature of 160°F, even though it's pink inside.

This is **NOT** a safely cooked hamburger. Even though it's brown inside, it is undercooked.

Turkey	165°F
Chicken	165°F
Lamb	160°F
Veal	160°F
Ground Beef	160°F
Beef (Well)	160°F
Beef (Medium)	145°F
Pork	145°F
Seafood	145°F

HOW TO USE A THERMOMETER

- Measure towards the end of the cooking time but before you expect it to be "done"
- Following the instructions, insert an instant-read thermometer in the **thickest part** of the food, not touching bone, fat, or gristle.
- Measure in **several places** to make sure food is heated evenly.
- Compare to the **USDA Recommended Safe Minimum Internal Temperatures** chart.
- **Clean thermometer** with hot, soapy water before and after each use.

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