

Turkey Tips and Holiday Food Safety

Why are we concerned about the food safety during the holidays?

Millions of people get sick from foodborne illnesses every year. During the holidays you are more likely to cook for large groups of people. This can make food safety more challenging.

What is the safest way to prepare meat or poultry?

- **Thaw foods safely** - Thaw in the refrigerator, under cold running water, or in the microwave. If you thaw food in the microwave, continue cooking immediately.
- **Keep everything clean during preparation** - Wash hands with warm, soapy water before preparation, after handling raw meat or eggs, sneezing/coughing, using the bathroom, changing diapers, or handling pets. Clean preparation surfaces with hot, soapy water. Use clean separate utensils and plates when handling and preparing raw meat or eggs.
- **Cook meats thoroughly** - Use a meat thermometer to ensure poultry and any stuffed or ground meat is cooked to 165°F. Cook fish and pork to at least 145°F and hamburger to 155° F. Never partially cook raw meats to warm later.
- **Serve it safely** - Always serve food with clean utensils. Never leave perishable food out of the refrigerator for more than 2 hours. Keep cold foods cold (keep on ice) and hot foods hot (use warming trays or a crockpot) when serving.
- **Store foods safely** - Cool all leftovers to 41°F within six hours after serving. Eat leftovers within three days or freeze if you want to store longer. Label and date the leftovers.



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For more information: www.cdc.gov/foodsafety



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