

Let's Talk Turkey (and other food safety tips)



Why are we concerned about food safety?

Millions of people get sick from foodborne illnesses every year. Food safety can be a real challenge during the holidays.

What is the best way to thaw frozen foods?

There are three safe ways to thaw food:

- **In the refrigerator** — for turkeys, allow about 24 hours for every five pounds of meat.
- **In cold water** with enough to cover the meat — change the water every 30 minutes. Allow 30 minutes of thawing per pound.
- **In the microwave** — remove the packaging and use a microwave-safe pan.

What is the safest way to prepare meat or poultry?

- Always wash your hands with soap and water — avoid wiping hands that have touched raw food on towels.
- Sanitize all work surfaces, utensils, and plates (use 1/2 teaspoon bleach per gallon water); then clean with soap and hot water.
- Use separate cutting boards for meats and vegetables — keep raw food away from dishes that will not be cooked.

Other food safety tips:

- Keep cold foods cold (below 40° F) and hot foods hot (above 140 ° F).
- Refrigerate all leftovers to 41° F within six hours after serving, and eat within three days; freeze if you want to store longer.
- Use clean serving spoons for each dish.
- Use a meat thermometer to cook turkey to 165° F internal temperature. Reheat leftovers to 165° F.

For more information go to: www.cdc.gov/Features/TurkeyTime/

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