

# 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/](http://www.cdc.gov/Features/TurkeyTime/)

## *Health Whys*

A public health message from

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