



Holiday Food Safety Tips

Don't serve foodborne illness this holiday season!

Each year, hundreds of people in Washington become ill and some are hospitalized because food they ate at a holiday meal was handled or prepared in an unsafe way. Follow these tips to protect you and your family.

Buying and Preparing

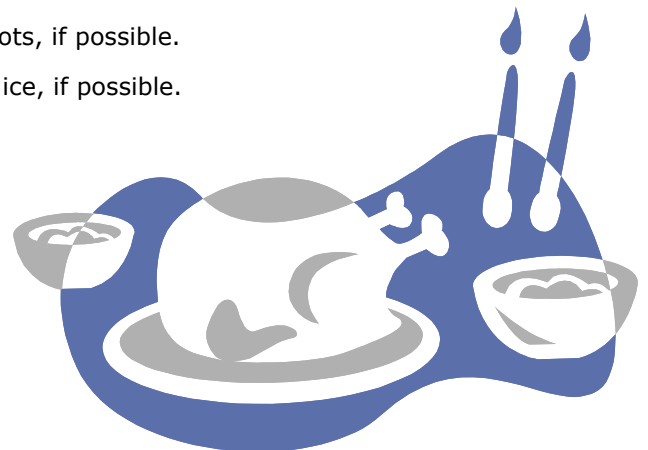
- Keep raw meats separate from other foods, especially fruit and vegetables in your shopping cart and grocery bags. Raw meats that are wrapped for display often leak. Put meat into a plastic bag to prevent drips that may contaminate other food.
- Always wash hands before you begin to prepare food and after handling raw meats. Use warm water, soap and paper towels. Remember that hands that look clean may be contaminated with millions of germs. Inadequate hand washing is a leading cause of foodborne disease today!
- Keep your kitchen and utensils clean. Wash cutting boards, knives and countertops that come into contact with raw meat.
- Do not re-use wash cloths after wiping countertops, especially after cleaning up raw meat juice.
- Thaw meat (turkey) in the refrigerator. Frozen meat is easy to undercook.
- Cook food to safe temperatures. Use a food thermometer to check.
 - Turkey, chicken, and poultry (including stuffing, pieces, and ground) - minimum of 165°F.
 - Pork - minimum of 160°F.
 - Ground beef or hamburger dishes - minimum of 160°F.
 - All other meat products - minimum of 145°F.
- Refrigerate foods right away. Do not leave food on the counter to "cool down." Cut or divide solid food (turkey) into small pieces and cool in containers without lids in the refrigerator. Wait until the food is cold, below 45°F before you put on the lid.

Serving

- Refrigerate, reheat, or throw away perishable food after 2 hours at room temperature. Keep track.
- Think small. Arrange and serve food on several small plates instead of one large one. Keep the rest of the food either hot or cold.
- Keep hot foods hot - above 140°F. Use warming trays or pots, if possible.
- Keep cold foods cold - below 41°F. Nest dishes in bowls of ice, if possible.
- Don't serve raw eggs mixed into drinks or food.

Storing

- Refrigerate leftovers right away.
- Reheat all leftovers to at least 165°F.



For more food safety information, see www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/food.