



Keep Your Holidays Healthy

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Thanksgiving is a time for families to gather and enjoy each other - not suffer from food poisoning! Here are a few tips to keep your family healthy:

- The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recommends thawing the turkey in the refrigerator. It takes 24 hours for every 5 pounds of turkey, not including the day you cook it. Therefore, a 20-24 pound turkey would take 6 days to thaw.
- Do not stuff your turkey. Place stuffing in a separate bowl to cook.
- USDA recommends an oven temperature no lower than 325°F for cooking a turkey along with using a thermometer to make sure the thickest part of the turkey reads 165°F. A 20-24 pound turkey may take about 5 hours to cook.
- Avoid cross-contamination by using separate cutting boards, plates, and utensils when handling raw turkey. Wash items that have touched raw meat with warm soap and water, or place them in a dishwasher.
- Refrigerate leftovers within two hours to prevent bacteria from growing on the food. Eat leftovers in the refrigerator within 3-4 days. Use the freezer to store leftovers for longer periods.
- Do not over-fill your refrigerator, as it causes it to work too hard and may not keep it at 40 °F or below.



For more information check out Family Fun on the Run at:
<http://go.unl.edu/familyfun>

Healthy Holiday Safety Tips

- Frequently wash your hands with warm water and soap for 20 seconds.
- Use a calibrated food thermometer.
- Clean out your refrigerator the week before Thanksgiving to make room for thawing items and storing leftovers.
- Store leftovers in shallow containers to decrease cooling time. This prevents food from spending too much time at unsafe temperatures.
- Do not prepare food when you are ill.
- Simplify the day by preparing foods the day before.
- Keep leftovers in a cooler with ice or frozen gel packs if the food is traveling home with a guest who lives more than two hours away.

Sources:

1. Thanksgiving Food Preparation and Food Safety Tips, Nebraska Extension: <https://go.unl.edu/hmvg>
2. Turkey, Foodsafety.gov: <https://go.unl.edu/fsvr>
3. Thanksgiving, Foodsafety.gov: <https://go.unl.edu/zpac>