



Holiday food safety

Keep it clean. Thoroughly wash cutting boards, utensils, and countertops in warm, soapy water before and after preparing food. Also, clean your hands with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds before and after food handling.

Keep it separate. Keep raw meat, poultry, and seafood separate from ready-to-eat foods. Designate separate cutting boards for meats and for fruits and vegetables to avoid cross contamination.

Keep track of the temperature. Use a food thermometer to ensure that foods are cooked to a safe internal temperature: 145°F for whole meats (allowing the meat to rest for 3 minutes before carving or consuming), 160°F for ground meats, and 165°F for all poultry.

Keep out of reach. Keep common baking ingredients such as vanilla and almond extract out of reach. They contain high levels of alcohol and may be harmful to children if swallowed.

Keep it cool. If you are cooking a turkey, properly defrost it by allocating 24 hours of defrosting time per 5 pounds of turkey, and remember to defrost it in the refrigerator – not the kitchen counter. Keep your refrigerator set below 40°F.

Keep it fresh. It's very important to store your leftovers in shallow containers so they cool faster in the refrigerator. Leftovers can be delicious, but they should be eaten within three to four days.

It's the season for celebrating with food, festivities and family fun. But, according to the Centers for Disease Control, one in six Americans gets sick every year from food poisoning. Food-borne illness is serious, and it can be deadly. Follow these simple reminders to help ensure a safe and healthy holiday season for all.

If you have a question about food safety or food poisoning, call the Wisconsin Poison Center 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 1-800-222-1222.

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