



FoodWise



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Holiday Food Safety

There are numerous reasons why 'tis the season to be jolly! The holiday season means quality time with family and friends. Pass the delicious portions of the holiday meal around the table, but not the foodborne illnesses! Follow these simple guidelines to prevent a foodborne illness:

CLEAN: Wash hands and surfaces often.

Bacteria that cause food poisoning can survive in many places around your kitchen, including your hands, utensils, and cutting boards.

- Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and warm, running water. Be sure to scrub the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your fingernails.
- Wash all surfaces and utensils after each use. Rinsing utensils, countertops, and cutting boards with water won't do enough to stop bacteria from spreading. Clean utensils and small cutting boards with soap and hot water. Clean all surfaces and cutting boards with a bleach solution.
- Wash fruits and vegetables. Even if you plan to peel fruits and veggies, it's important to wash them first because bacteria can spread from the outside to the inside as you cut or peel them.



SEPARATE: Don't cross-contaminate. Even after you've cleaned your hands and surfaces thoroughly, raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs can still spread illness-causing bacteria onto ready-to-eat foods—unless you keep them separate.

- Use separate cutting boards, plates, and utensils for raw (uncooked) fruits and vegetables and for raw (uncooked) meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs.
- Keep meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs separate from all other foods while you're shopping at the grocery store and storing in the refrigerator.
- Thaw or marinate foods in the refrigerator, **never** on the counter or in the kitchen sink.

COOK: Cook to the right temperature. Many people believe they can tell when food is "done" simply by checking its color and texture. However, there's no way to be sure it's safe without following a few important, but simple steps.

- Use a food thermometer. Make sure food reaches its safe minimum cooking temperature. For example, internal temperatures should be 145°F for whole meats, 160°F for ground meats, and 165°F for all poultry. Eggs should be cooked until the yolk is firm.
- While food is being served and eaten, keep it hot (at 135°F or above).
- Microwave food thoroughly (to 165°F).

CHILL: Refrigerate promptly. Bacteria can grow in many foods within two hours unless you refrigerate them.

- Refrigerate foods within 2 hours of serving that tend to spoil more quickly (like fruits and vegetables, milk, eggs, and meats). Warm foods will chill faster if they are divided into several clean, shallow containers.
- Know when to throw food out. When in doubt, throw it out!

To learn more about holiday food safety tips, visit the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [Food Safety Tips for the Holidays](#) webpage.



Salmonella

Salmonellosis is an infectious disease caused by the *Salmonella* bacteria. Most people infected with *Salmonella* develop diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps 12 to 72 hours after infection. The illness usually lasts 4 to 7 days, and most people recover without treatment. However, in some people, the diarrhea may be so severe the person needs to be hospitalized. Approximately, 42,000 cases of salmonellosis are reported in the United States every year. Many milder cases are not diagnosed or reported; therefore, the actual number of infections is estimated at more than 1.2 million cases.

Salmonella live in the intestinal tract of humans and other animals and is transmitted to humans by eating food contaminated with animal feces. Contaminated foods usually look and smell normal and are often of animal origin, such as beef, poultry, milk, and eggs. Vegetables and other ready-to-eat foods may become contaminated by the hands of infected handlers who do not wash their hands properly after using the bathroom. *Salmonella* can be prevented by following these easy tips to avoid becoming ill and making guests or customers sick:

- Cook all meat, poultry and eggs thoroughly. Make sure that the meat is cooked throughout (no longer pink) and any juices run clear. All poultry should be cooked to reach a **minimum** internal temperature of 165°F.
- If you are served undercooked meat, poultry, or eggs in a restaurant, send it back for further cooking.
- Wash your hands before and after handling raw foods of animal origin, and before touching anything else.
- Prevent cross-contamination in the kitchen by using separate cutting boards for foods of animal origin and other foods. Carefully clean all cutting boards, countertops, and utensils with soap and hot water after preparing raw foods of animal origin.

To learn more about *Salmonella*, visit the CDC's [Salmonella](#) webpage.

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If you have any questions or comments, please contact Scott Stanley Scott.Stanley@dph.sbcounty.gov, Health Education Specialists, at 800-442-2283.

We appreciate the effort you make to protect the public's health in our County.