

Nutrition Notables

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Special points of interest:

- Learn how to avoid food poisoning when hosting parties!

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Bah, Humbug to Bacteria! How to Avoid Food Poisoning This Holiday Season

At this time of year, people are enjoying holiday get-togethers, parties and festivities, and more often than not these include food. Food safety is always important year round and the holidays are no exception. No one wants food poisoning, and no one wants their guests to get it either. So the following are tips on how to celebrate the holidays and keep you and your guests from getting food poisoning.

Preparation:

- Always thaw frozen turkeys (or any frozen meat for that matter) in the refrigerator or under cold water. Allow 24 hours of time for each 4-5lbs of turkey in refrigerator. If you're using cold water, cover the turkey completely with water for 30 minutes for each pound of turkey, and completely change the water every thirty minutes. If you decide to thaw your meat in cold water, you need to cook it right away. Meats thawed in the refrigerator do not need to be cooked right away.
- With fresh turkey, it's best to buy it only 1-2 days prior to holiday, and do not buy a prestuffed fresh turkey.
- People often here that

stuffing a turkey can cause food poisoning. This is true if you are not careful. If you do want to stuff your turkey, do it loosely and use moist stuffing. Heat destroys bacteria faster in a moist environment.

- Don't eat cookie dough, cake batters, eggnog or anything else with raw unpasteurized eggs in it. This is especially important for pregnant women, very small children and anyone with a compromised immune system. If you are making a recipe that calls for raw eggs, try to use pasteurized ones or egg substitute.
- Wash your hands frequently. When in doubt, wash. Try to sing happy birthday each time to make sure you get all the bacteria off.
- Many people cook by taste. If you do, get a new spoon or fork, taste and then put it aside to wash. Don't use the same one over.
- Wash all produce. Even the pre-washed stuff. Avoid cross-contamination. Cut raw meat on a separate cutting board from other foods. Don't cut something you don't plan to cook on a



Say Bah, Humbug to Bacteria!

cutting board that you've used for raw meat or other foods you do plan to cook. Don't wipe your hands with a kitchen towel after touching raw foods. Wash them and dry them with paper towel instead.

Cooking:

- The best way to ensure any meat is cooked properly is to use a meat thermometer. When checking the temperature of your meats, always check in the center of the thickest part. For whole poultry (chickens, turkeys, etc), check the innermost thigh and wing and the thickest part of the breast. Beef, veal, and lamb steaks, roasts, and chops should be cooked to 145 °F, all cuts of pork, ground beef, veal and lamb to 160 °F, and all poultry to

Recipe Box—Cranberry Sauce



1 cup cranberry-raspberry juice
 1 cup sugar
 1 package (12 ounces) fresh or frozen cranberries, thawed
 1 tablespoon lemon juice

In a large saucepan, bring juice and sugar to a boil. Add cranberries; return to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10-15 minutes or until the berries pop, stirring occasionally. Remove from the heat; stir in lemon juice. cool. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour or until chilled.

Serves 11.

Nutrition Information per serving (1/4 cup): 101 calories, 0g fat, 0mg cholesterol, 1 mg sodium, 26 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 0g protein.

Diabetic Exchanges: 1-1/2 fruit.

Recipe provided courtesy of Taste of Home Magazine. Find more great recipes at www.TasteofHome.com

Continued—Bah, Humbug to Bacteria!



Avoid Food Poisoning This Holiday Season!

165 °F. If you stuff your bird, the stuffing should also reach a temperature of 165° F.

If you have to transport foods to a party or get together try to keep them the correct temperature. Hot or cold foods can be carried in insulated bags or wrapped in towels. Cold foods can also be packed in coolers with ice or frozen ice packs.

Serving:

- Keep eggnog and dairy-based foods (cheese, milk, yogurt, whip cream, or anything that contains these items) in the refrigerator until right before you plan to eat them.
- Food should not sit out at room temperature more than 2 hours.
- Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Crock pots set on low are a great way to keep your hot foods hot. Place dishes of cold foods in bowls of ice to keep them cold.

- Instead of refilling dishes and platters with new food, put out a new dish/platter fresh from the refrigerator. As people are eating of the dishes they are touching food and the dish and this can spread bacteria and other germs. Also you are less likely to exceed the 2 hour limit for food sitting out this way. Using small platters and dishes, will make doing this easier.

- Children will often want to help themselves from the buffet table. Be sure to keep things they can choke on or burn themselves on out of their reach. It's best to only serve pasteurized apple cider.

Storing:

- Refrigerate leftovers in shallow dishes. This helps the food to cool faster, so it is less likely to grow bacteria.
- All leftovers in the refrigerator should be eaten within 3 to 4 days. If you don't think you will be able

to finish them off in that amount of time, try putting some of them in the freezer for later.

- If bad weather causes you to have to cancel or postpone your party, try to reschedule within 4 days. If you are not able to do so within 4 days, you can re-freeze meat if you thawed it in the refrigerator. You can also freeze other foods. It's tempting to store foods outside when you're refrigerator is overflowing. However, this is not a good idea. The outside temperature can vary and may be in a danger zone without you realizing it and critters and bugs can help themselves. Try to plan ahead to make sure you have enough room for everything. If you do need more places to store food, use coolers instead and refill the ice frequently. If you're really in a pinch, you can put ice in your washing machine and store closed containers such as soda there.

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***Have a Happy, Healthy and Safe Holiday
Season!***

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