

Poison Prevention Press

November/December 2018

Volume 11, Issue 6

More Holiday Safety Tips

- Many extracts used in holiday baking contain alcohol. Vanilla has almost as much alcohol as vodka. Lemon, orange, and mint extracts contain even more! Be aware of how much you are adding in recipes.
- Cocktails can look like juice to young children. While being consumed, keep away from children and make sure they know they have their own drink. After the guests are gone, make sure you clean up the leftover drinks before going to bed.
- Eggnog should be made with pasteurized eggs. If alcohol is added, make sure children do not drink it.

For more information:

<https://www.foodsafety.gov>

<https://www.fda.gov/food/resourcesforyou/consumers/ucm188807.htm>

Did you know that...

- In 2017, the MPC answered more than 350 calls about food or food poisoning?
- Poinsettias do not cause serious harm to people and pets?

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Holiday Food Safety

The Holiday season is time for families to come together around the table and share a special meal. It is also the season for spreading germs and bacteria that can lead to food poisoning. Instead of spending time in the bathroom this holiday season, prevent food poisoning by following these food safety tips.

Thawing and Chilling

All meat, poultry, and seafood should be thawed in its unopened bag on a tray or plate, as it can sometimes leak when thawing. No matter which option you choose, **DO NOT** thaw or marinate food on the counter or at room temperature! That is the quickest way for bacteria to grow.

- **Option 1:** The safest way is to put the frozen food in the refrigerator to thaw. The USDA recommends that a frozen turkey stay in the refrigerator for 24 hours for every 4-5 pounds it weighs to ensure it is fully thawed.
- **Option 2:** Submerge the frozen food in its original package or a sealed bag in cold water. Make sure it is covered entirely with water. Change the water every 30 minutes.
- **Option 3:** Put the frozen food in the microwave and use the defrost function according to its weight (the weight can be found on the package).

Put leftovers in the refrigerator within 2 hours of being cooked. The earlier you can get leftovers into the refrigerator, the lower the risk of getting food poisoning. Leftovers can be saved in the fridge for 3-4 days after being cooked. They are safe in the freezer for 2-6 months.

Cleaning

It is important that your hands, utensils, and cutting surfaces stay clean and free of bacteria. Wash your hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds. Wash plates, utensils, and cutting boards with hot soapy water. This should be done after working with each different food item. If preparing fruits and vegetables, wash them even if you are planning on peeling them. **Do not** wash meat or poultry because their juices can splash in the sink and onto countertops. Bacteria can be found in the juices.

Cooking

Do not rely on color to determine if food is fully cooked. Always use a meat thermometer in food to determine the temperature, not any other kind of thermometer. For a turkey, take the temperature in three places: the thickest part of the breast, the thigh, and the wing joint. All three places should be at least 165°F each. Chicken should also be cooked to 165°F, and pork & ham should be cooked to 145°F.

Who to Call

If you suspect food poisoning or another type of exposure or poisoning, call the experts at 1-800-222-1222! We are here to help any time, day or night...even on holidays!

