



Panhandle Health District

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Panhandle Health District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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It's Turkey Time! Thanksgiving Food Safety Tips

HAYDEN, ID – The holiday season is here and Panhandle Health District is urging community members to take precautions in the kitchen. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that each year roughly 1 in 6 Americans (48 million people) gets sick, 128,000 are hospitalized, and 3,000 die of foodborne diseases.

“Holiday buffets, party trays or poorly stored leftovers can often be the culprit of disease,” said Environmental Health Specialist, Kristina Keating. “Those shopping for and preparing meals should pay close attention to good hygiene practices to avoid foodborne illnesses like E.coli, Salmonella or Norovirus.”

Here are a few essential food safety tips to avoid getting sick during the holiday season:

Wash Hands Often - Wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and water following restroom use, before preparing foods, after handling raw meat, and before eating. Clean hands will help prevent the spread of bacteria.

Keep Surfaces Clean and Separated - Wash and sanitize food-contact surfaces often. Bacteria from raw meat can spread onto cutting boards, knives, dishes and counter tops.

Take Temperatures - Use a food thermometer to ensure all your dishes are safe and delicious. Cook your turkey until its internal temperature reaches at least 165 °F.

Store Leftovers Properly - Cooked, hot foods should be kept at 140 °F or warmer. Cold foods should be kept at 41 °F or less. Store leftover food in shallow containers and refrigerate within 2 hours of serving it. Use refrigerated turkey and stuffing within 3-4 days. Use gravy within 1-2 days.

Feeling Ill? Let Someone Else Do the Cooking – If you recently experienced cold symptoms, vomiting or diarrhea, avoid the kitchen as much as possible. Many foodborne illnesses are transmitted unknowingly by a food preparer with these symptoms.

If you have any questions or concerns about food safety, you can contact PHD's Environmental Health Specialists at (208) 415-5220 or by submitting your question [online](#). Information on food safety is also available by phone at the Food and Drug Administration's Food Information Line: 1 888-SAFEFOOD (723-3366).

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