

IN THE KNOW ABOUT NUTRITION

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Keeping Healthy and Safe During the Holidays

Everyone wishes for a safe, healthy, and happy holiday season. Food safety is especially important as we head into the holiday season of eating, drinking, and being merry.

Holiday Health and Safety Tips

Wash your hands often

Keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps you can take to prevent getting sick and spreading germs to others. Be sure to use warm, running water and soap. The CDC recommends washing hands for at least 20 seconds. An easy way to do this is to sing the “birthday song” in your head while washing hands. Two times through the song equals about 20 seconds of hand washing time.

When should I wash my hands?

- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- After sneezing, coughing, or blowing your nose
- After touching animals or pets or handling their food
- After touching garbage
- After going to the toilet

Handle and Prepare Foods Safely

The potential for foodborne illness outbreaks during the holidays is high. Follow some simple guidelines to keep yourself and family safe during the holidays.

Clean: Wash hands and food contact surfaces often. Bacteria can quickly spread to counter tops, sponges, cutting boards and knives

Separate: Don’t cross-contaminate. Keep raw meats and juices separate from fresh fruits and vegetables or ready-to-eat foods. Store raw meats on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator to prevent juices leaking onto other foods.

Cook: Cook foods to proper temperatures. Foods should be heated for a long enough time and at a high enough temperature to kill harmful bacteria. Follow guidelines and recipes. It can be very dangerous to stuff a turkey because the stuffing sometimes does not get cooked thoroughly. To be safe, cook your stuffing/dressing separate from the turkey.

Chill: Refrigerate promptly. DON’T leave holiday dinner leftovers out on the counter after everyone is finished eating. The CDC recommends refrigerating foods as quickly as possible to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria. Two hours is the maximum food should be left out. Refrigerators should be set at 40 to 33 degrees F.

Handling Holiday Leftovers

- Cover all leftovers and store in refrigerator as soon as possible after everyone is finished eating
- Never use leftovers more than once
- Label leftovers and discard if not consumed within 2 days
- Reheat leftovers thoroughly before eating

Product	Minimum Internal Temperature
Beef, pork, veal & lamb (steaks, chops, roasts)	145°F (62.8°C) and allow to rest for at least 3 minutes
Ground meats	160°F (71.1°C)
All poultry (breasts, whole bird, legs, thighs, wings, ground poultry, and stuffing)	165°F (73.9°C)
Fish & shellfish	145°F (62.8°C)

Easy Candied Yams

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 25 minutes

Servings: 4-6

Cost for recipe: \$3.58

Cost for all ingredients: \$5.66

Ingredients:

1 (29 ounce) can of yams in light syrup

2 tablespoons margarine

1/3 cup brown sugar

1 cup miniature marshmallows

Directions:

Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees F

Place sweet potatoes in a medium baking dish, then mash sweet potatoes with a hand-held masher.

Distribute butter pieces evenly over the sweet potatoes.

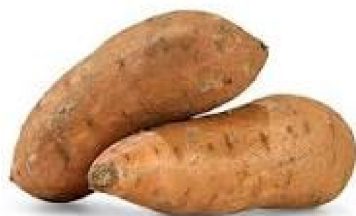
Sprinkle with brown sugar. Layer with marshmallows.

Bake in preheated oven 25 minutes, or until sweet potatoes are tender and marshmallows have melted and browned.

Recipe courtesy of allrecipes.com

(References at <http://bit.ly/home-food-safety-inspection>)

Article source: Authored by or Adapted from Alice Henneman, MS, RDN, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension, Food Reflections Newsletter



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