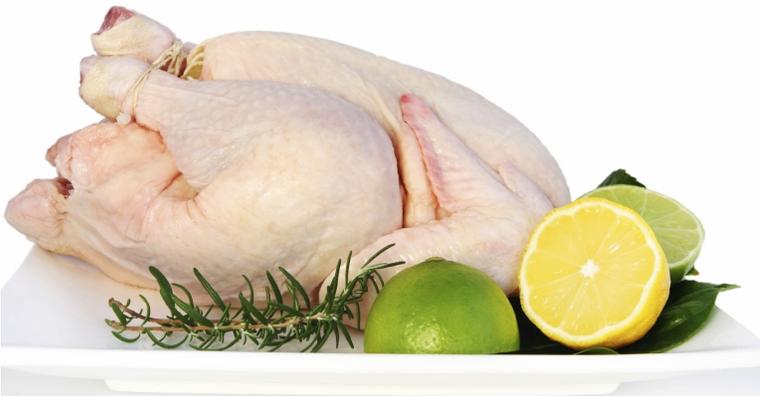




Food Safety Tips for your HOLIDAY TURKEY



Keep your friends and family safe this holiday season by properly preparing, serving, and storing your turkey. Raw turkey may contain bacteria (such as Salmonella) that may lead to illness if it is not properly handled and cooked. Food safety is a key ingredient in all of your holiday recipes and an important step in making sure you and your guests have a great dinner, and feel great afterwards too!

Purchasing

- Make sure you put your turkey in the refrigerator or freezer right away when you get home. It is a good idea to plan ahead to make sure you have enough storage space in your refrigerator. Never leave your turkey in the car.
- If your turkey is fresh, it can be stored in your refrigerator at a temperature of 4°C (40°F) or lower for a maximum of 2-3 days before cooking.

Preparing

- Prepare all ready-to-serve food (e.g. raw vegetable trays, crackers, fruit trays) before handling raw turkey to avoid cross-contamination.
- Wash your hands with soap and water before and after you handle your turkey.
- When defrosting your turkey:
 - The safest place to defrost your turkey is in the refrigerator at 4°C (40°F) or lower.
 - Allow 24 hours per 5 pounds of turkey when defrosting your turkey in the refrigerator at 4°C (40°F) or lower.
 - Place your turkey in a dish that is deep enough so

raw juices can't leak out, and store your turkey on the bottom shelf of your refrigerator. This will prevent raw juices from contaminating other items in your refrigerator.

- Never leave your turkey on the counter to defrost it. This can allow harmful bacteria to grow.
- Never run hot water over your turkey to defrost it. This can allow harmful bacteria to grow.
- Sanitize any food contact surfaces (e.g. counter tops, cutting boards, and utensils) right after use. To make the sanitizer solution mix 4 ml of bleach in 4 cups of water.

Cooking

- Cook your turkey immediately after it is thawed.
- Your turkey needs to be cooked to an internal temperature of at least 82°C (180°F) to prevent foodborne illness. Using a food thermometer is the only way to ensure your turkey has reached an internal temperature of 82°C (180°F).
- Insert your food thermometer into the thickest part of the meat. Avoid touching any bones, as this can give you a false temperature reading.
- Wash and sanitize your food thermometer between uses.
- The safest way to cook your stuffing is to cook it separate from your turkey.

Serving

- Make sure no one is picking at the turkey or other food while it is being prepared or served. This helps to prevent the spread of bacteria from hands to food.
- Place serving spoons or utensils with all dishes.
- Keep hot food hot! This means keeping your turkey at 60°C (140°F) or higher until it is served.
- Remember the two hour rule. Make sure turkey is not left out for more than 2 hours at room temperature.
- Do not re-fill a turkey plate (or any dish) that has been sitting at room temperature for more than two hours. Instead, replace this with a clean dish.

Cooling & Storing

- Once your turkey is served, cut any remaining meat off the bones for storing in the refrigerator. Cooling the meat right away will prevent harmful bacteria from growing.

- Refrigerate any leftovers at 4°C (40°F) or lower within two hours.
- Store turkey in smaller containers to allow it to cool quickly.
- Always store turkey meat separate from any sides or gravy.

Travelling with your turkey

- If you are traveling to your holiday event your turkey might not need to be buckled in, but it does need to be kept at the right temperature!
- After being cooked, hot food must be kept at 60°C (140°F) or higher until it is served.
- If you are transporting your turkey cold, it must be kept at 4°C (40°F) or lower.
- Bacteria can grow rapidly between 4°C (40°F) and 60°C (140°F) so it is important to keep your turkey out of this temperature danger zone.
- Use an insulated container to transport your turkey.
- Check that the internal temperature of your turkey is 60°C (140°F) or higher when you arrive at your destination. Use a food thermometer to do so. If it is less than 60°C (140°F) make sure you reheat your turkey to at least 74°C (165°F) before serving.
- If you are bringing leftover turkey home from your holiday event, plan ahead and bring a cooler and cold packs.

Reheating & Leftovers

- Reheat leftovers to a minimum of 74°C (165°F) before eating.
- Eat your leftover turkey within 3-4 days.
- If you know you won't finish your leftovers within 3-4 days, freeze them right away to eat at a later date. Reduce your food waste and avoid foodborne illness at the same time!

Find more information on safely preparing, serving, and storing other holiday favourites like hollandaise sauce, eggnog, or cider at: <https://hnhu.org/health-topic/food-safety-at-home/>

For storage information for common foods see: <https://hnhu.org/health-topic/food-storage-guide/>

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