

# Having a Healthy, Germ Free Holiday Meal

## Quick Tips to Prevent Food Poisoning from your Holiday Turkey:

**Plan ahead:** If you have purchased a frozen turkey, place the turkey in its original package into a baking pan and place in the fridge. Allow 24 hours of thawing time for every five pounds of turkey (example: if your turkey weighs 10lbs, plan on two days to defrost). If you won't have room in the refrigerator, order a fresh turkey the day before.



**Use a thermometer:** Stuffing should be cooked outside of the bird to allow it to reach the proper temperature. If you do place it in the turkey make sure it reaches 165° F. The turkey needs to reach 180° F (inner thigh), 170° F (breast).

**Large Party?** If you are making large batches of food ahead of time, use shallow dishes to cool them down quickly and keep the fridge at the right temp – 40°F (see food safety article on the Danger Zone and storage information).



**Serving buffet style:** Place food in small portions on the platter (or place food platter with larger portions on an ice bed). As food runs out, bring out more yummy food on a fresh plate (remember the two hour rule too).

**Brining the turkey:** This is a great way to have a moist turkey; make sure you place the turkey in the solution in the fridge the day before (in other words, don't have it sit out on the counter otherwise you will be serving up brined germs).

**Ready for leftovers on Friday?** Place turkey slices, mashed potatoes, and other side dishes in shallow airtight containers within an hour after cooking (no longer than 2 hours). Eat leftovers within the next three days. After that, it is time to toss it out and get ready the next holiday.

Have a question on the Day of Thanks: call the USDA's Meat and Poultry hotline: (888) 674-6854 (special hours on holidays: 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Eastern Time).



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