



No Weight Gain Contest

Healthy
Tips

Food Safety

Adapted from USDA and NIANR

This is the season of goodwill and giving thanks, but it is also a festive celebration of food. With so many delectable foods to choose from, it's important to keep these treats safe from BAC (a.k.a. bacteria). Ensure a safe holiday feast for you and your loved ones this year by following these safety food tips.

Buffets

These are commonly found during the holidays to celebrate with family, friends and co-workers. Unfortunately, food is often left out for long periods, leaving the door open for uninvited guests – bacteria that can cause food-borne illness.

Preparing Food for the Party

- Remember to wash your hands with soap and water before and after handling any food.
- Always use separate plates and utensils when working around raw meats and poultry and do not use the same plates when serving cooked food.

Party Crasher – *Clostridium perfringens*

More commonly known as the “cafeteria germ” because it is often found in foods serviced in large quantities. These germs thrive when food is left out for more than two hours at room temperature.



Beware of BAC!

This holiday season be aware of bacteria and these facts:

The Invisible Enemy

You may not be able to see, taste, or smell bacteria, but it can multiply rapidly on food if kept in a moist, warm environment.

Be Egg-stra Cautious!

Cookie dough and cake batter may sound tempting to eat raw, but usually contain uncooked or lightly cooked eggs. Even grade A eggs with clean, uncracked shells can be contaminated with the *Salmonella* Enteritidis bacteria. That's why it's important to thoroughly cook eggs to kill any bacteria that may be present.



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To prevent these bacteria from growing in your food:

- Keep cooked foods hot (140°F or higher) by using chafing dishes, slow cookers and warming trays.
- Keep cold foods cold (40°F or colder) by nesting dishes in bowls of ice or use small serving trays and replace often.
- Cool foods quickly in the refrigerator.
- Keep moist foods like eggnog, cheesecakes, and pies refrigerated until serving time.

Leftovers

Who doesn't love leftover turkey and other holiday dishes? There are limits on how long you can safely keep leftover food. Keep in mind the following when heating and storing leftover food.

- Refrigerate cooked leftovers within two hours.
- Divide leftovers into smaller portions and store in shallow containers in the refrigerator.
- Reheat cooked leftovers to 165°F and use a food thermometer to measure the temperature.
- Bring sauces, soups, and gravies to a boil when reheating.
- Cover and stir microwavable leftovers to avoid cold spots (where bacteria can survive).

Cold Storage Guidelines for Some Holiday Foods

Product	Refrigerator (40°F)	Freezer (0°F)
Fresh eggs, in shell	3 to 5 weeks	Do not freeze
Soups & Stews – vegetable or meat added	3 to 4 days	2 to 3 months
Fresh turkey, whole	1 to 2 days	1 year
Fresh turkey, pieces	1 to 2 days	9 months
GIBLETS	1 to 2 days	3 to 4 months
Cooked meat, poultry & vegetable casseroles	3 to 4 days	2 to 3 months
Gravy & meat broth	3 to 4 days	2 to 3 months
Stuffing, cooked	3 to 4 days	1 month

Remember to: Clean - Separate - Cook - Chill