



# No Weight Gain Contest

## PRACTICE FOOD SAFETY

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*

These germs thrive when food is left out for more than two hours at room temperature. 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

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.



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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.



## 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**

