# PREVENT *Thanksgiving* FAILS

### Keep food poisoning off the menu

Holiday traditions, family gatherings, and home-cooked meals are a treasured part of the holiday season. With Thanksgiving just days away, families are hard at work preparing for Thanksgiving dinner and spending time with friends and family. Meal prep can be overwhelming and stressful. With distractions all around, it's easy to make mistakes that may cause guests to leave with more than full bellies.



#### Common Thanksgiving Fails

- Forgetting to thaw the turkey
- 2. Undercooking the turkey
- 3. Cooking the turkey in the packaging
- Forgetting about a guest's food allergy
- 5. Eating the fake fruit and vegetables used for table decorations

Whether you're preparing dinner for two people or a large group, following basic food safety steps will keep everyone at the table from getting sick.

Foods can become contaminated with germs at any point of the food production chain — from farming to grocery stores to leftovers. Handling or preparing food incorrectly can make it unsafe to eat.

#### Diane Calello

Executive and Medical Director New Jersey Poison Control Center Rutgers New Jersey Medical School



### Food poisoning is common and can cause mild to severe sickness

Symptoms may include nausea, vomiting, stomach cramps, diarrhea, upset stomach, and fever. A person may not feel sick right away because symptoms may appear a few hours or days after eating. Anyone who is feeling sick should not prepare or cook food because their germs can spread to foods. Raw poultry, meat, and seafood can spread germs to anything they touch — hands, countertops and surfaces, sinks, utensils, dishes and containers, foods, and cutting boards. When preparing and cooking food, follow these <u>four safety steps</u> (Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill). Cooking foods to the right temperature kills germs and prevents people from getting sick.







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#### Guests can also get food poisoning from cooked foods

Bacteria and other germs grow quickly in foods that reach temperatures in the "**Danger Zone**" — between 40°F and 140°F.

When serving food, keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold to prevent illness.

It is unsafe to leave food out of the refrigerator or freezer for more than two hours.



According to the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture), hot foods can go straight into the refrigerator without <u>cooling</u> first. If reheating leftovers, use a food thermometer to make sure the food reaches at least 165°F.

#### **Cook Meat and Eggs to Safe Internal Temperatures**

www.cdc.gov/foodsafety



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## Cooking Kills Germs

Everyone is at risk for food poisoning, but young children, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems are more likely to get sick from eating foods contaminated with bacteria and other germs.



If this year's holiday dinner includes turkey, follow these important food safety steps.





Handle the turkey safely to prevent spreading germs to other foods.

Do not wash or rinse raw turkey.

Cook the stuffing separately from the turkey.



Use a food thermometer to make sure turkey and other foods are cooked to safe temperatures.

Store leftovers safely.

## 24/7 Get Free Medical Help 1-800-222-1222

Medical specialists are available to provide information, answer questions, and provide emergency support 24 hours a day

Anyone can call for medical help – children, teens, and adults

#### **NJ Poison Control Center**

is a medical resource for both the public and healthcare providers. If you think someone came in contact with something dangerous, contact your local poison control center immediately.

Call the NJ Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 or <u>Chat Here</u> If someone is not breathing, hard to wake up, or having a seizure, call 9-1-1