




Help yourself to some holiday food [safety tips](#) from the NJ Poison Center



 **1-800-222-1222**  
**New Jersey Poison Center** 



## Common Thanksgiving Fails

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

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 loved ones. Meal prep can be overwhelming and stressful especially when cooking for a large group of people. With distractions all around, it's easy to make mistakes that may cause guests to leave with more than full bellies.



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



Foods can become contaminated with germs at any point of the food production chain – from farming to grocery stores to kitchens and leftovers. Preparing, cooking, or storing foods incorrectly can make them unsafe to eat.

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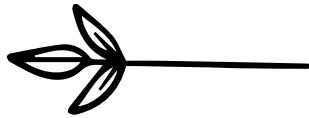
1-800-222-1222





# Foodborne illness

is common and can cause mild to severe sickness



Symptoms of foodborne illness (also known as food poisoning) 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 consuming contaminated food or drinks. Anyone who is feeling sick (**cold, flu, RSV, or COVID-19**) should not prepare or cook foods for other people because

their germs can spread to foods and drinks.

Raw poultry, meat, and seafood can spread germs to anything they touch — hands, countertops and surfaces, sinks, utensils, dishes, containers, foods, and cutting boards. When preparing and cooking food, follow these [four safety steps](#) (Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill). Cooking foods to the right temperature kills germs and prevents people from becoming sick.



*Cooked foods can also make guests sick if left out on the table or counter for too long before putting them in the refrigerator.*

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 foods at a safe temperature – hot foods hot and cold foods cold. It is unsafe to leave foods including pies that contain dairy or eggs 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 [cooling](#) 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](http://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety)



**145°F**



**Pork Roast**

**Rack of Lamb**



**Beef Brisket**

After cooking, let meat rest for 3 minutes before serving.

**145°F**



**Fish Fillet**

**160°F**



**Ground Beef**



**Egg Dish**

**165°F**



**Ground Turkey**

**Turkey**



**Chicken**

**Leftovers**

## Cooking Kills Germs

Everyone is at risk for foodborne illness, 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.



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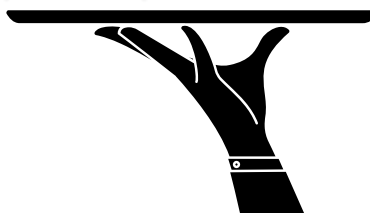


**New Jersey  
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Center**



If this year's holiday dinner includes turkey, follow these important

### Steps to prevent illness



Allow enough time for the turkey to fully defrost. A partially frozen turkey will cook unevenly leaving parts undercooked.

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.



# Get Free Medical Help 1-800-222-1222

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

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

[NJPoisonCenter.org](https://www.njpoisoncenter.org)

## **NJ Poison Control Center**

is a medical resource for both the public and healthcare providers.

If you think a child consumed any amount of liquid nicotine, contact the New Jersey Poison Control Center immediately for medical treatment advice.

Call the NJ Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 or [Chat Here](#)

If someone is not breathing, hard to wake up, or having a seizure, call 9-1-1