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HEALTHY CHOICES FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES

 Cooperative
Extension Service



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Holiday food safety: Planning ahead

Food is as much a part of holiday gatherings as football, decorations, and carols. This holiday season, keep food safety in mind each step of the way. Be food safe when you plan, shop, work in the kitchen, and wrap up leftovers.

Proper planning

Make sure your kitchen is equipped with what you need for safe food handling. Have two cutting boards (one for raw meats and seafood and the other for produce and ready-to-eat foods), a food thermometer, shallow containers for storage, paper towels, and soap. Store foods in the refrigerator at 40 degrees F or below or in the freezer at 0 degrees F or below. Check the refrigerator and freezer with an appliance thermometer.

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PARENT CORNER

The joys of cooking with kids during the holidays

With special treats and family gatherings, this is the perfect time to teach your child about cooking! Kids not only will get to try the new foods they make, but they also get a big boost when they see family and friends eating their creations. Cooking with your children now helps them learn how to make healthy meals.

Safety precautions

To be safe, cover a few ground rules before getting started in the kitchen. Teach kids to wash their hands with warm, soapy water while singing "Happy Birthday" two times to wash away germs.

Teaching basics

To start cooking, teach your child basics. This could be as easy as cracking an egg or setting out each item needed for a favorite holiday recipe. Teach your child how to measure the right amount of each ingredient. Also show them the types of utensils you might need.

Look who's cooking!

Keep your children eager to cook. Choose tasks of holiday recipes based on their skills. Here are some ideas.

- **3- to 5-year-olds:** mix and stir snap green beans, tear lettuce for a salad, press cookie cutters
- **6- to 7-year-olds:** shuck corn, use a vegetable peeler, crack eggs, measure ingredients
- **8- to 9-year-olds:** use a can opener, juice citrus fruits, check the temperature of foods with a thermometer, pound chicken on a cutting board



- **Children aged 10 and older:** slice or chop vegetables, boil potatoes, microwave foods, bake foods in the oven, simmer ingredients on the stove.

Allow your child time to slowly master cooking methods. Start with easy steps such as rolling dough, using a cookie cutter, or spreading frosting. Give them time to complete each step from pouring liquids into the batter to baking them in the oven. Teach cooking skills such as baking versus broiling and how to cook many kinds of dishes.

Source: Adapted from <https://www.eatright.org/homefoodsafety/safety-tips/holidays/the-joy-of-cooking-with-kids-during-the-holidays>

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Safe shopping

Be sure to keep food safety in mind as you shop. Keep raw meat, poultry, and seafood away from ready-to-eat foods like fruit, vegetables, and bread. It is OK to buy fruits and veggies that are oddly shaped but don't buy bruised or damaged ones. Don't buy canned goods that are dented, leaking, bulging, or rusted. These could become a breeding ground for harmful germs.

Choose cold foods last. Bring foods straight home from the grocery store. Always refrigerate food that can spoil, such as raw meat or poultry, right away.

Working in the kitchen

In a holiday kitchen filled with family and friends, all hands may be on deck. But are those hands clean? Make sure each person washes hands with clean, running water and soap for 20 seconds before and after handling food.

And when you bake tasty holiday treats, don't forget that no one should eat raw cookie dough or brownie batter.

Wrapping up leftovers

As you eat and visit, keep in mind how long the food has been on the buffet table. You can't tell if a food is unsafe by taste, smell, or how it looks. Throw away foods that spoil if they sat out of the refrigerator longer than two hours. Foods such as meat, poultry, eggs, and casseroles can spoil quickly.

Refrigerate or freeze other leftovers. Use shallow, air-tight containers. Label and date each package. Use refrigerated leftovers within three to four days. Reheat those leftovers to 165 degrees F.

Source: <https://www.eatright.org/homefoodsafety/safety-tips/holidays/holiday-food-safety-planning-to-leftovers>

COOKING WITH KIDS

Perfect Pumpkin Pancakes

- 1 cup whole-wheat flour
- 1 cup all-purpose white flour
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 1/4 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup canned pumpkin, unsalted (not pumpkin pie filling)
- 1 3/4 cups low-fat milk
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil

1. Wash hands with warm water and soap, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds.

2. Combine whole-wheat flour, white flour, brown sugar, baking powder, pumpkin pie spice, and salt in a large mixing bowl.
3. In a medium bowl, combine egg, canned pumpkin, milk, and oil. Stir to mix well.
4. Add wet ingredients to flour mixture. Stir just until moist. The batter may be lumpy. (For thinner pancakes, add more milk.)
5. Lightly coat a griddle or skillet with cooking spray and heat on medium. Flip when bubbles appear, or pancake is golden on the bottom.

- Repeat until all batter is used.
6. Store leftovers in the refrigerator within 2 hours.

Number of servings: 12
Serving size: 1 pancake

Nutrition facts per serving: 130 calories; 3.5g total fat; 1g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 15mg cholesterol; 350mg sodium; 21g total carbohydrate; 2g dietary fiber; 4g total sugars; 2g added sugars; 4g protein; 6% Daily Value of vitamin D; 6% Daily Value of calcium; 6% Daily Value of iron; 2% Daily Value of potassium

Source : <https://www.mainesnap-ed.org/recipes/perfect-pumpkin-pancakes>

BASIC BUDGET BITES

Maximize those leftovers!

If you end up making a big meal for your loved ones, chances are that you'll have leftover food. Don't forget the power of leftovers to help save you stress and money this holiday season! Most people agree that turkey dinner leftovers are just as good the second or third day. Most guests will be glad that you are feeding them. They will not blame you for serving them leftovers — even if they were there for the first meal.

To use your leftovers "as is," follow these tips:

- Remove any meat from the carcass or bone. Cut it into small pieces. Store it in shallow containers in the refrigerator or freezer.
- Use all leftovers within four days or freeze for later use.
- Reheat leftovers to 165 degrees F, or until hot and steaming.

Source : <https://extension.umn.edu/save-money-food/holiday-food-budget>

RECIPE

Turkey Stew

- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped (or 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder)
- 4 carrots, chopped
- 2 celery stalks, chopped
- 2 potatoes, chopped
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) no-salt-added diced tomatoes
- 2 cups water
- 2 cups cooked turkey, chopped
- Salt and pepper (optional, to taste)
- Italian seasoning or oregano, basil or thyme (optional, to taste)

1. Wash hands with warm water and soap, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds.
2. Heat oil in medium saucepan. Add onion, garlic, carrots, and celery and stir for 2 minutes.

3. Add potatoes, tomatoes, and water to pan. Bring to a boil, then lower heat and simmer 30 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Add turkey and cook another five minutes or until heated.
4. Season to taste before serving.
5. Store leftovers in the refrigerator within 2 hours.

Number of servings: 4
Serving size: 2 cups

Nutrition facts per serving: 270 calories; 4g total fat; 1g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 55mg cholesterol; 150mg sodium; 32g total carbohydrate; 6g dietary fiber; 7g total sugars; 0g added sugars; 25g protein; 0% Daily Value of vitamin D; 4% Daily Value of calcium; 10% Daily Value of iron; 25% Daily Value of potassium

Source: What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl

FOOD FACTS

Carotenoids

Carotenoids are a substance found in food that helps protect cells against damage. There are more than 600 types of carotenoids. Foods high in carotenoids may be effective in helping prevent certain cancers and may help decrease your risk of macular degeneration.

Foods high in carotenoids include red, orange, deep-yellow, and some dark-green leafy vegetables. Examples include sweet potatoes, spinach, carrots, tomatoes, Brussels sprouts, winter squash, and broccoli.



Source: EatRight, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

LOCAL EVENTS

SMART TIPS

Getting enough sleep

Going out more and staying out later often means losing out on sleep. Sleep loss can make it harder to manage your blood sugar. When you don't get enough sleep, you tend to eat more and want high-fat, high-sugar food. Aim for 7 to 8 hours of sleep per night to guard against mindless eating.

Most of all, think about what the season is about — celebrating and connecting with the people you care about. When you focus more on the fun, you focus less on the food.

Source: Adapted from <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/library/features/holidays-healthy-eating.html>

If you are interested in nutrition classes, contact your Extension office.



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