

EPI Update for Friday, November 21, 2008
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Keeping healthy during the holidays**
- **Healthy holiday recipes from Mayo Clinic**
- **Holiday cooking: Keeping it safe**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Keeping healthy during the holidays

As the holidays draw near, remember to eat healthy and to incorporate physical activities into your holiday plans.

Healthy holiday recipes from Mayo Clinic

Mayo clinic and IDPH suggest that this year, instead of serving the old standbys — turkey smothered in gravy, candied yams, buttered corn and pumpkin pie — you try these healthier recipes for making the traditional holiday foods; they have all of the taste, but less fat, calories and sodium. Included are recipes for roasted turkey with balsamic brown sugar sauce or herb-rubbed turkey au jus, sweet potatoes and roasted bananas, green beans with red pepper and garlic, and for dessert, pumpkin-hazelnut tea cake. For these and more recipes, visit www.mayoclinic.com/health/thanksgiving-recipes/NU00643

Holiday cooking: Keeping it safe

Be sure to keep food safe by following basic food safety steps throughout the holiday season.

Clean: Wash hands and food-contact surfaces often. Bacteria can spread throughout the kitchen and get onto cutting boards, knives, sponges, and counter tops.

Separate: Don't cross-contaminate-don't let bacteria spread from one food product to another. This is especially true for raw meat, poultry and seafood. Keep these foods and their juices away from ready-to-eat foods.

Cook: Cook to proper temperatures. Foods are properly cooked when they are heated for a long enough time and at a high enough temperature to kill the harmful bacteria that cause food-borne illness.

Chill: Refrigerate promptly. This keeps most harmful bacteria from growing. Refrigerators should be set at 40 F and the freezer at 0 F.

Thawing the Thanksgiving Turkey

In the refrigerator: The safest method to thaw a turkey is in the refrigerator (40 F or below). Allow approximately 24 hours per four to five pounds of turkey.

In cold water: Submerge the securely wrapped turkey in cold water and change the water every 30 minutes. Allow about 30 minutes defrosting time per pound of turkey.

In the microwave: Microwave thawing is safe if the turkey is not too large. Check the manufacturer's instructions.

Cooking

While roasting your turkey is still the most popular option, the recommendations for roasting at 325 F are:

Without stuffing: 10 to 12 minutes per pound of turkey.

With Stuffing: 12 to 15 minutes per pound of turkey.

Use a food thermometer to check that the internal temperature of the turkey reaches 165 F throughout the bird, including the stuffing.

Storing Leftovers

Cut the turkey into small pieces; refrigerate stuffing and turkey separately in shallow containers within two hours of cooking. Use leftover turkey and stuffing within three to four days or freeze these foods. Reheat thoroughly to a temperature of 165 F or until hot and steaming.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

None

Because of the Thanksgiving holiday there will not be a Friday EPI Update next week.

Have a healthy and happy Thanksgiving!

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Iowa Department of Public Health

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