



News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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CDPH Offers Food Safety Tips for the Holidays

SACRAMENTO – With the holiday season approaching, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) reminds consumers to use safe food preparation and storage measures to prevent foodborne illness. Bacteria that can be found in foods such as meat and poultry may cause illness if they are insufficiently cooked, inadequately cooled or improperly handled.

“We can help ensure that foodborne illnesses don’t ruin our holidays by properly preparing and handling meat, poultry and other foods,” said CDPH Director and State Public Health Officer Dr. Karen Smith.

About 48 million illnesses, 128,000 hospitalizations and 3,000 deaths in the U.S. each year are related to foodborne diseases, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Foodborne diseases can be prevented by:

- Washing hands with soap and warm water before and after food preparation, and especially after handling raw foods.
- Cleaning all work surfaces, utensils and dishes with hot soapy water and rinsing them with hot water after each use.
- Cooking food thoroughly and refrigerating adequately between meals.

Symptoms of foodborne disease can include diarrhea, which may be bloody, vomiting, abdominal cramps and fever. Most infected people recover from foodborne illnesses within a week. Some, however, may develop complications that require hospitalization. Young children, the elderly, pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems are at highest risk for potentially life-threatening complications.

For more information about preparing and storing food, visit the following CDPH links:

- [Food Safety Tips for Holiday Feasts](#)
- [Safe Food Handling Practices](#)
- [Controlling Food Allergens](#)
- [Foodborne Pathogens and Illnesses](#)

Additional information about food safety is available on the U.S. Department of Agriculture Meat and Poultry hotline at 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854). Consumers can also access the national Partnership for Food Safety Education’s [Fight BAC!](#) website.

www.cdph.ca.gov