

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS
State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ENCOURAGES FOOD SAFETY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

TALLAHASSEE — With Thanksgiving right around the corner – and food traditionally playing a large part in the festivities – the Florida Department of Health is encouraging Floridians to keep safe food preparation and handling practices in mind.

"A Happy Thanksgiving will include thoughtful preparation of food for family and friends," said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. "Practicing food safety and filling your plate with healthier items like fresh from Florida fruits and vegetables will help ensure a healthy holiday."

The Department recommends the following for reducing the chances of food contamination.

- **Clean.** Wash hands, utensils, and surfaces before and after food preparation, especially after preparing meat, poultry, eggs, or seafood. Be sure to keep all countertops and work areas clean. As an extra precaution use one tablespoon of unscented, liquid bleach for each gallon of water to sanitize washed utensils and surfaces.
- **Cook to Proper Temperature.** Read the cooking directions on the packaging before preparing. The safest thawing method is in the refrigerator at 40 degrees. Make sure the food is cooked at the proper internal temperature and check for doneness with a food thermometer.
- **Chill – Refrigerate Properly.** Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared food and leftovers within two hours. Make sure the refrigerator is set at no higher than 40 degrees and the freezer is set at 0 degrees.
- **Separate- Don't cross contaminate.** Keep raw meats, poultry, eggs and seafood and their juices away from ready to eat food. It is recommended that leftovers be heated to 165 degrees. Leftovers that appear cloudy, mushy or have an unusual odor should be disposed of.

For more information on how to keep your family safe from foodborne-illness this holiday season, visit <http://www.foodsafety.gov/>. To watch a Thanksgiving message from the State Surgeon General please visit [Thanksgiving Wishes](#).

The Department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts. During 2014, the Department is recognizing 125 years of public health in Florida with educational opportunities and events. Please visit www.FLHealth125.gov for more information.

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