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## FOOD SAFETY DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON



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**Eustis, FL** – As Lake County residents prepare to celebrate this holiday season, the Florida Department of Health in Lake County (DOH-Lake) stresses the importance of safe food preparation and storage to prevent possible foodborne illnesses.

### Prevent factors that can contribute to foodborne illnesses by:

- Properly washing of hands and fingernails before and after handling food.
- Follow cooking instructions and ensure initial cooking temperature is reached.
- Proper food storage (adequate refrigeration temperature or hot holding temperature). Safe refrigeration temperature is less than 41 degrees Fahrenheit, and safe hot holding temperature is greater than 140 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Never letting hot or cold foods sit at room temperature for more than two hours.
- Proper cooling of foods. Safe cooling of foods is getting the foods to less than 41 degrees Fahrenheit within a four-hour time period.
- Avoiding cross contamination (such as from uncooked meat to salad ingredients)
- Proper cleaning and sanitizing of eating and cooking utensils, work areas and equipment
- Avoiding contamination of food, utensils and equipment from flies, roaches and other pests
- Serving food on clean plates. Never let juices from raw meat, poultry and seafood come in contact with cooked food.
- Storing foods in shallow containers to refrigerate or freeze them.

“Have a safe and Happy Holiday Season and just remember the basics of food safety to clean, cook, chill and separate” said Stephanie Daugherty, Environmental Health Director Florida Department of Health in Lake County.

For additional information please visit <http://lake.floridahealth.gov/> or contact DOH-Lake Environmental Health at (352) 253-6130.

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