

## Be Food Safety Wise this Christmas

With Christmas just around the corner, people will be planning parties and buffets to celebrate with family and friends.

Many cases of food poisoning occur around the festive season because people do not follow food safety rules. Food poisoning is a miserable and potentially dangerous experience. Many people attribute its symptoms to a simple tummy upset or seasonal overindulgence.

Certain people such as children, pregnant women and the elderly are more vulnerable to food poisoning bacteria, so be very careful when preparing foods for them.

**This Christmas make sure the food at your party is safe to eat by following our food safety tips.**

Large print, taped or other language versions of all or any part of this leaflet can be made available on request. Please telephone **0115 931 6030.**

## Christmas Food Safety Tips

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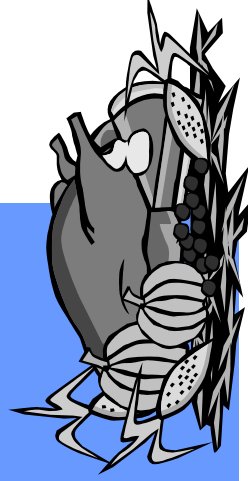
Food Safety EL05

## Top Tips for Food Safety

### Plan carefully

Uninvited guests can spoil any party - especially when they are harmful bacteria like Salmonella and E coli 0157. When lots of food has to be prepared then it is worth taking some simple precautions to keep food safe.

Don't prepare food too far in advance. It's a good idea to make a list of dishes and then make sure you have enough fridge and freezer space for them. The foods that need to be kept cool will be raw ingredients, cooked foods such as cold meats, quiches and desserts and other perishable items. If you don't have the space you need, think again about your list of dishes.



Defrost thoroughly. Always defrost frozen meats and poultry fully before cooking, even if this means getting foods out of the freezer the day before.

### Temperature Control is essential

KEEP hot food hot and cold food cold.

DO NOT leave food standing around for hours in a warm room before it is eaten.

Cook meat thoroughly. Turkey, chicken, sausages and chopped or minced meats should always be cooked until they are piping hot throughout, until there is no pink inside and juices run clear. Never eat them rare.

Cool down hot foods to room temperature as quickly as possible before putting them in the fridge or freezer. To speed cooling, you can divide them into smaller portions, place in a wide dish and stand this in a shallow tray of cold water.

Don't overload the fridge. If it is too full, air cannot circulate freely and cooling is impaired. Keep the door closed as much as possible. Use a fridge thermometer to ensure that the fridge is between 0° and 5° Centigrade (32° - 41° Fahrenheit).

### Prevent contamination of foods

WASH your hands thoroughly in hot soapy water before preparing food and especially after touching raw meat and other raw foods.

CLEAN equipment and surfaces thoroughly after preparing raw foods and before contact with other foods.

ALWAYS store cooked or ready to eat foods on a higher shelf than raw foods in the fridge.

AVOID preparing food for yourself or others if you are ill, especially with sickness and/or diarrhoea.

KEEP cuts and grazes covered with a waterproof plaster.

KEEP pets out of the kitchen when preparing food.

### Take care with eggs

DO NOT use raw eggs in uncooked foods (e.g. home-made mayonnaise or chocolate mousse). Use pasteurised egg or commercial products.



**The Council's Environmental Health Staff wish you a healthy, happy Christmas.**