



News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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CDPH Offers Food Safety Tips for Holiday Feasts

SACRAMENTO – As the holiday season ramps up, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) is reminding Californians about the importance of safe food handling to prevent foodborne illness.

"Thorough cooking, adequate refrigeration, good hand washing and work area hygiene are the key practices to prevent foodborne illness," said CDPH Director and State Public Health Officer Dr. Ron Chapman. "Properly prepared and handled foods ensure not only a safe holiday meal, but a safe meal every day."

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 48 million illnesses, 128,000 hospitalizations, and 3,000 deaths annually in the United States are related to foodborne diseases.

Bacteria such as *Salmonella* and *E. coli* O157:H7 are responsible for many foodborne illnesses, caused by eating contaminated foods. Contamination usually occurs as a result of poor food handling practices at the farms, factories, restaurants or homes.

Symptoms of foodborne disease include fever, abdominal cramps, and diarrhea which may be bloody. 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 persons with a weakened immune system are at highest risk for potentially life-threatening complications.

Foodborne diseases can be prevented by simple safety steps in the kitchen. Wash hands with soap and warm water before and after food preparation, and especially after handling raw foods. Clean all work surfaces, utensils and dishes with hot soapy water and rinse with hot water after each use. Be sure to cook foods thoroughly and to refrigerate adequately between meals. Visit this page for more [food safety tips, including proper cooking temperatures](#).

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