



## Knox County Health Department

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### **KCHD offers food safety tips ahead of Thanksgiving**

*Knoxville, Tenn.* – Thanksgiving is quickly approaching and that means meal preparation is at the top of everyone’s mind. To make sure your Thanksgiving meal is prepared safely, the Knox County Health Department is offering food safety advice to keep you and your guests healthy.

Follow the tips below to reduce the likelihood of foodborne illness this holiday season.

**Cleaning:** Wash your hands between kitchen tasks and sanitize food contact surfaces often. Always wash for 20 seconds with soap and water after handling raw foods and before eating. The CDC recommends rinsing fresh fruits and vegetables; however, do NOT place raw turkey under running water. Washing raw meat and poultry can cause bacteria to spread up to three feet away. Turkeys may contain Salmonella and Campylobacter, harmful pathogens that are only destroyed by properly cooking the turkey.

**Separate:** Keep raw meat, seafood and eggs away from the ready-to-eat foods. This includes keeping these items separate in the grocery store, refrigerator and cutting boards.

**Cooking:** Thaw frozen turkeys safely in the refrigerator several days prior to cooking. Never thaw foods on the counter because bacteria multiply quickly in the parts of the food that reach room temperature. Use a thin tipped, metal stemmed thermometer in the thickest portions of the meat to ensure that you have at least reached an internal temperature of 165 degrees F.

**Chilling:** Make sure to refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours after cooking. Leftovers are safe in the fridge for 3-4 days or in the freezer for 2-6 months.

**Reheating:** Whether reheated in the microwave or oven, all food items should be reheated to an internal temperature of 165 degrees F.

For more information, visit KCHD’s Food Protection Division webpage or call 865-215-5200.

### **About Knox County Health Department**

The first health department in Tennessee to achieve national voluntary accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board, the Knox County Health Department (KCHD) is dedicated to ensuring the conditions in which every resident can be healthy. For more information, visit <http://www.knoxcounty.org/health>

