



Food safety advice

Eat Safe at Christmas

Everyone buys (and eats!) lots more food at Christmas. The trouble is that our refrigerators stay the same size and the food has to compete with the extra stocks of wine and beer! To help you to eat safe, the Food & Safety team have some good tips for you, to make sure that food poisoning doesn't spoil your celebrations.

- Make sure you keep all of your cooked meats wrapped in cling film or foil, in the fridge to protect them from food poisoning bacteria found on raw foods. Keep raw meats at the bottom of the fridge.
- Make sure that big frozen joints of meat, turkeys, chickens etc. are properly defrosted before you cook them. Follow the times given in the instructions on the wrapping or push a skewer or fork into the meat to make sure it feels soft in the middle.
- Clean all worktops and chopping boards with an 'anti-bacterial' cleaner (sanitiser) if they have had raw meat on them. First clean the surface with hot soapy water to remove dirt and debris, then use an antibacterial spray. Clean all knives & plates in the same way if they have been used for raw meat.
- Consider using disposable paper towels instead of a dishcloth for wiping down the worktops. If you do use a dishcloth, then wash it after every use. Dirty cloths can easily spread food poisoning bacteria.
- Cook all meat thoroughly – push a fork into the thickest part of the meat and make sure that the juices that run out are clear and not bloody.
- Try and keep vegetables, wine and beer & soft drinks in a cold part of the house until you need them (an outside store, porch, garage or shed are ideal as the weather is normally cold). This will free up some space in the fridge for the things that really need to be there.
- If cooked food has been left out all night (at the end of your party) throw it away. Even salads and rice can make you ill if they've been left out for a long period of time!



What food should I put in the fridge to keep it safe?

Cooked meats, leftovers from the roast dinner, gravy, stuffing (especially if it has sausage meat in it), cream, desserts with cream in them, mayonnaise, coleslaw, cooked rice dishes, cooked fish, prawns, cheeses. Have a look on the labels of things you buy – they should say 'keep refrigerated' on them if they need to be in the fridge. If you can't fit your cooked turkey in the fridge, once it has cooled down, cut all the meat off it and just store the meat in the fridge.