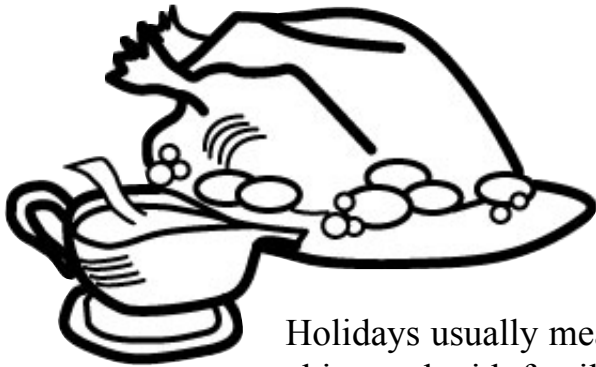




Handle Holiday Leftovers Safely



Holidays usually mean a big meal with family and friends. For many years you probably were very involved with preparing and serving this meal in your home. That may have changed - now you may eat at a restaurant or in the home of someone else.

Some things don't change including what to do with those leftovers. It is just as important or maybe more important to have a plan on how to safely store and use leftovers following a big holiday meal.

Here are five steps to help you make your plan:

1. Discard the leftovers if you cannot refrigerate or freeze them within two hours from the time they were served. Two hours is the maximum time perishable foods should be at room temperature. Just one bacterium dividing every 20 minutes can grow to nearly 33,000 in five hours.

Perishable foods include:

- T**Meat, poultry and seafood
- T**Dairy products
- T**Cooked pasta, rice and vegetables
- T**Gravy and stuffing

2. Cool leftovers quickly in shallow containers in the refrigerator.

3. Use leftovers promptly:

- T**Leftover turkey will keep refrigerated 2-3 days

- T**Stuffing and gravy will keep only 1-2 days refrigerated

- T**Fruit and vegetables leftovers can be kept 2 -3 days in the refrigerator

- T**If you have more leftovers than you can use quickly, freeze them. At 0°F, frozen leftovers are safe indefinitely, but for best quality use within two to four months.

4. Re-heat leftovers until steaming hot throughout, at least 165°F.



5. When in doubt, throw them out.

TYou cannot see or smell most bacteria that might make you sick. Tasting is risky and won't tell you if the food is safe.

Enjoy your holidays and keep them safe by following these rules about leftovers.

Turkey Sweet Potato Hash

1 cup sweet potatoes, cooked and cubed
½ cup apple, cored and cut into ½-inch pieces

2 teaspoons vegetable oil

2 Tablespoon chopped onion

1 cup diced, cooked, skinless turkey or chicken

½ teaspoon thyme

¼ teaspoon salt

Pepper to taste

In skillet heat oil, add all other ingredients. Mix gently, cook over medium heat for 8 to 10 minutes or until brown on bottom, turning occasionally. Serves 2.

Nutrition Info. per serving: 250 calories, 45 mg cholesterol, 28 gm carbohydrates, 6 gm fat.



1-½ cups chopped cooked turkey

¼ cup diced celery

2 Tablespoons minced onion

1 cup cooked vegetables

1 ½ cups turkey gravy

1 cup seasoned mashed potatoes

Place turkey, vegetables and gravy in layers in shallow baking dish. Spoon mashed potatoes in ring around edge of turkey pie. Bake at 425°F for 20 minutes or until hot. Serves 4.

Nutrition Info. per serving: 390 calories, 8 gm fat, 70 mg cholesterol, 47 carbohydrates.

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