



Nutrition Newsletter

Hints for a Healthy, Happy Thanksgiving

Department of Public Health in Partnership with the University of Saint Joseph

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Inside This Issue:

Tips for purchasing and preparing your holiday turkey

• Tip of the Season

Keep food safe from germs by washing hands and cooking to recommended temperatures

• Healthy Recipes

* Stuffing with Vegetables



Tip: Before bringing your turkey home, make enough space in your refrigerator.

Fresh or Frozen?

Fresh turkeys have shorter shelf lives and do not need thawing. Frozen turkeys can be bought in advance and be kept frozen for up to a year for best quality. Frozen turkeys usually cost less.



What size turkey do I need?

At least one pound of uncooked turkey per person.

When should I buy it?

You can buy a fresh turkey 1-2 days in advance.

Frozen turkey should be bought early enough as needed to thaw in the refrigerator.

How do I thaw my turkey?

Frozen turkey (and other frozen foods) can be thawed in the refrigerator, but never on the counter. Leave the turkey in the original packaging and place it in a shallow pan on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator. Allow refrigerator thawing time at a rate of 4-5 pounds per 24 hours. For example, a 15 pound turkey will take 3 to 4 full days to thaw in the refrigerator. Cook the turkey immediately after it is thawed. Do not refreeze.

How do I stuff my turkey safely?

Ideally, stuffing a turkey is not recommended. Cooking stuffing outside the bird in a dish helps it cook evenly. If you do stuff the bird, mix the stuffing and loosely stuff the turkey just before it is placed into the oven. All stuffing recipes must be cooked to at least 165° F as measured with a food thermometer.

How do I roast my turkey?

Set oven to 325° F, season turkey with pepper, onion and garlic, or other spices and herbs. Place in a preheated oven.

When done, remove turkey and cover with foil. Let it sit 20-30 minutes before serving.

How long do I cook my turkey?

Turkeys should be cooked until 165° F is measured with a food thermometer in the deepest part of the thigh, the wing and the thickest part of the breast.



See the back page for a list of average cook times.

Cooking Timetable for Roasting a Turkey at 325° F

Unstuffed Turkey	Time	Stuffed Turkey	Time
4 to 8 pounds (breast)	1½ to 3¾ hours	6 to 8 pounds (breast)	2½ to 3½ hours
8 to 12 pounds	2¾ to 3 hours	8 to 12 pounds	3 to 3½ hours
12 to 14 pounds	3 to 3¾ hours	12 to 14 pounds	3½ to 4 hours
14 to 18 pounds	3¾ to 4¼ hours	14 to 18 pounds	4 to 4¼ hours
18 to 20 pounds	4¼ to 4½ hours	18 to 20 pounds	4¼ to 4¾ hours
20 to 24 pounds	4½ to 5 hours	20 to 24 pounds	4¾ to 5 hours

Storing Leftovers Safely

- Discard any turkey, stuffing, and gravy left out at room temperature longer than 2 hours; 1 hour in temperatures above 90 °F.
- Divide leftovers into smaller portions. Refrigerate or freeze in covered shallow containers for quicker cooling.
- Use refrigerated turkey, stuffing, and gravy within 3 to 4 days.
- If freezing leftovers, use within 2 to 6 months for best quality.
- When using leftovers, reheat foods thoroughly to 165° F and bring gravy to a boil before serving.
- Refrigerators should be set at a temperature of 40° F.

Cold Storage Guidelines for Holiday Foods

Food	Refrigerator 40° F	Freezer 0° F
Soups & Stews— vegetable or meat added	3 to 4 days	2 to 3 months
Fresh turkey, whole	1 to 2 days	1 year
Fresh turkey, pieces	1 to 2 days	9 months
Giblets	1 to 2 days	3 to 4 months
Cooked meat and casseroles	3 to 4 days	2 to 3 months
Vegetable casseroles	3 to 4 days	2 to 3 months
Gravy and meat broth	3 to 4 days	2 to 3 months
Cooked poultry casseroles	3 to 4 days	4 to 6 months

Recipe: Stuffing with Vegetables



Ingredients:

1 pound (16 ounces) frozen vegetables
1 tablespoon margarine
1 package (6 ounces) low-sodium bread mix
1 can (14 ounces) low-sodium chicken stock
1 teaspoon garlic powder

Directions:

Place vegetables in a large bowl. Melt margarine and pour over vegetables. Stir to combine. Add stuffing mix, broth, and garlic powder. Stir to combine. Scoop into a casserole dish. Microwave on high for 10-12 min until hot in center and temperature reaches 165°F.