



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Green County Public Health Reminds You to Keep Food Safety in Mind this Holiday Season**

Green County – With Thanksgiving quickly approaching, and other winter holidays right around the corner, many people are preparing to host or attend celebrations with lots of food. Whether you are cooking the meal for Thanksgiving, or brining cookies to a party, it's important to practice good food safety habits while you're cooking and baking. These habits help keep you, your friends, and family members safe from foodborne illnesses.

Foodborne illness, sometimes called food poisoning, is caused by food that has been contaminated, often times by bacteria, but also other toxins. Some of the most common examples of foodborne illness include Norovirus, Salmonella, Campylobacter, Listeria, and E. coli, but there are many other diseases that can be spread through food as well. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 48 million people get sick from a foodborne illness, 128,000 are hospitalized, and 3,000 die in the United States each year. Green County Public Health often contacts individuals who are sick with and have gotten tested for certain foodborne diseases. By investigating foodborne disease outbreaks, public health officials can learn about possible problems in food production, distribution, and preparation. These diseases are preventable though, by taking some safety precautions you can help prevent the spread of foodborne illness.

- **Wash Your Hands** – Wash your hands often with soap and water while you're preparing food; be sure to wash them after using the bathroom, handling raw meat, coughing or sneezing, and after touching garbage.
- **Don't Eat Raw Food** – Avoid eating dough or batter that contains raw eggs or flour, do not eat raw meat such as uncooked beef in so called "Tiger Meat" or "Cannibal Sandwiches."
- **Use Pasteurized Products** – Pasteurizing means heating at high temperatures for short amounts of time, this kills harmful bacteria on or in a food without affecting the taste or nutritional value. Always use pasteurized eggs and milk in recipes that call for those ingredients,
- **Cook Food Thoroughly** - Use a food thermometer to check that beef, chicken, turkey, and seafood have been cooked to a safe internal temperature to kill germs.
- **Keep Hot Food Hot, and Cold Food Cold** - Bacteria can quickly grow on food left in the danger zone between 40°F and 140°F. Do not leave food sitting out for more than 2 hours; refrigerate or freeze perishable food like meat, chicken, turkey, seafood, eggs, cut fruit, cooked rice, and other leftovers.

For more tips on food safety, and information about foodborne illness, visit the CDC's website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/index.html>. To get updates on foodborne illness outbreaks and food recalls, follow Green County Public Health on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/greencountyph>. Visit the Green County Public Health website to learn more about other public health topics:

<https://wi-greencounty.civicplus.com/192/Public-Health>.

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