

FCH TIMES

FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALTH IN WARD COUNTY

December 2019 Issue 2

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Enjoy the Holidays.....

Don't abandon health habits or feel pressured to eat and drink more than usual just because of the holidays. Make sure you get plenty of sleep, exercise, and plan your meals ahead of time; you will make it through the holidays feeling



HOLIDAY STRESS: EATING HEALTHY

Holidays such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's bring to mind thoughts of family, friends, fun, and food. However, each year, millions of Americans struggle to maintain their waistlines during the holidays while surrounded by tempting holiday treats.

Holiday Parties

By following the healthy tips below, you will be on your way to enjoying all your holiday parties, while also staying in control of your eating:

- Do not leave the house on an empty stomach- it promotes overeating.
- Limiting your drinking: alcohol increases hunger and lowers willpower.
- Avoid standing near the food table, a sure-fire way to overindulge.

Cooking and Baking

If you are the one hosting use that to your advantage- it puts you in control of what will be served. For example, substituting high-fat or calorie-laden ingredients for a healthier choice. However, there is a downfall when it comes to hosting: the temptation to sample the food while you are preparing it. To help you resist the urge to snack while cooking:

- Keep your mouth occupied with a piece of sugar-free gum or sip tea to reduce your urge to sample while you cook.
- Prepare foods on a full stomach. You will not be as tempted to taste what you are making.

Cocktails and Beverages

Before you reach for the eggnog, remember that some mix drinks may have as many calories as a dessert. It's okay to indulge in some holiday spirits, but keep the following suggestions in mind:

- Pace yourself; drink water or seltzer between drinks. The more you drink, the urge temptation to snack increases.
- Try ice water with lemon or non-caffeinated soft drinks.
- Consume mixed drinks with diet soda, club soda or tonic when possible.

Decoration: Fire Safety Tips

Trees

- When purchasing an artificial tree, look for a “Fire Resistant” label.
- If you have a metallic tree, never use electric lights on it. You could be electrocuted.
- When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness. Make sure the needles are soft and are not falling off. Hard brittle needles are signs of a dry tree, which can easily catch fire.
- Live trees need water, and lots of it. Cut about one inch off the bottom of the trunk before putting in the stand and add water checking it daily.
- Do not block your exit door with your tree.

Remove live trees from your home as soon as possible. Most Christmas tree fires occur on or after New Year’s Day.

Lights

- Check each light set for damaged sockets or wires. Discard light sets and extension cords that are worn or cracked.
- Use UL approved light sets. Follow the manufacturer recommendations concerning the maximum number of lights sets that can be connected together.
- Replace burnt out bulbs with bulbs of the same wattage as indicated on the tag attached to the light set.
- Turn off all lights before you go to bed or leave the home.
- Use only the light sets and extension cords marked “For Outdoor Use” outside your home.
- Fasten outdoor lights securely with insulated clips or hooks. Use circuits protected by ground fault circuit interrupter.

<http://www.weathersafety.ohio.gov/winterfiresafetytips.aspx>





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SAFE HOLIDAY COOKING

Safe Thawing

There are three safe ways to thaw food: in the refrigerator, in cold water, and in the microwave oven. Store frozen turkeys in the freezer until time to thaw. While frozen, a turkey is safe indefinitely. However, if the turkey can thaw at a temperature above 40 degrees, any harmful bacteria that may have been present before freezing can begin to multiply again unless proper thawing methods are used.

- When thawing a turkey in the refrigerator, plan. Place the turkey on a platter and place in the refrigerator. For every 5 pounds of turkey, allow approximately 24 hours of thawing in a refrigerator set at 40 degrees.
- For thawing in cold water, allow about 30 minutes per pound. Be sure the turkey is in leak-proof packaging and submerge it in cold tap water. Change the water every 30 minutes until the turkey thaws.
- When thawing in the microwave, follow the manufacturer's instructions. For both defrosting in cold water and in the microwave, cook the turkey immediately after thawing because conditions were not temperature controlled.

Handling Precooked Dinners and Leftovers

Some cooks forego home-cooking a turkey altogether and choose to purchase precooked dinners. There are also basic safety measures for the safe handling of these holiday meals. If the dinners are to be picked up hot, keep the food hot. Harmful bacteria multiply in the "danger zone" between 40 and 140 degrees.

- Set the oven temperature high enough to keep the internal temperature of the turkey and side dishes at 140 or above.
- Eating the food within 2 hours of pickup
- When picking up cold turkey dinners, refrigerate them as soon as possible, always within 2 hours. Serve the meal within 1 to 2 days. Turkey may be eaten cold, but reheating a whole turkey is not recommended. To reheat, slice breast meat (legs and wings may be left whole), and heat turkey pieces and side dishes thoroughly to 165.
- Perishable foods should not be left out of the refrigerator or oven for more than 2 hours. Refrigerator or freeze all leftovers promptly in shallow containers. It is safe to refreeze leftover turkey and trimmings even if they were previously frozen.

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/>

Common Food Safety Mistakes

Wash your hands when you have switched tasks. Also, bandage cuts and sores on your hands, too.

Handwashing is so important because bacteria multiply on warm, moist hands. Hands pick up germs, spreading from surface to surface, food to food, and person to person. One of the best ways to control the spread of illness is through handwashing. Cleaning work surfaces often to remove food particles and spills. Use a multipurpose cleaner for everyday spills and disinfectant, such as chlorine-bleach solution or a disinfectant cleaner. To make a chlorine bleach-water solution; mix 2 teaspoons of bleach in a quart of water.

- Countertop thawing
- Leftovers left out of the fridge
- Unclean cutting board
- Room-temperature marinating
- Store-to-refrigerator lag time
- BBQ blunder: same platter for raw and grilled meats
- Restaurant “doggie bag” delay
- Stirring-and-tasting spoon
- Shared knife for trimming raw meat and chopping vegetables
- Undercooked high-risk foods, such as eggs, meat, poultry, and fish.

Inside Ward County 4-H

Consumer Education: Do you like to shop? Learn how to save money while shopping in the consumer decision making project. You'll learn how to compare prices, test for quality and make purchases based on facts and research. In this project you will learn how to compare prices, test for quality and make purchases based on facts and research. You will also improve your: Money management skills, Smart purchasing skills and Decision-making skills. **We will be having our first meeting January 14, 2020 at the Bentley Center beginning at 5pm.**

Fashion & Interior Design: Do you like to be creative in what you wear and the space around you? The 4-H Fashion and Interior Design program is perfect for you. In this project you can learn to design, construct and be a smart consumer when purchasing clothing and household items. Have fun creating environmentally friendly projects while exploring careers in the fashion and interior design industries. **We will be having our first meeting January 13, 2020 at the Bentley Center beginning at 5pm.**

Food & Nutrition Project: Members Shawnda Canales, Charlotte Rasband, Faith Thurman, Samantha Thurman and William Thurman attend the District 6 Food Spectacular on November 20, 2019, at the Ward County Event Center where they compete in the Food Show Competition against youth from Andrews, Crockett, Howard, Val Verde, Upton, Ector/Midland, Glasscock, Martin, Winkler, Pecos, and Terrell Counties. We had youth in all three age divisions and competed in the Main Dish and Breads & Cereals categories.



'Maintain No Gain' Holiday Challenge

The average person puts on some extra pounds in the six weeks between the Thanksgiving holiday and the New Year. Unfortunately, weight that's gained in a short six weeks may take six months to lose. And if you had already been trying to shed a few pounds, putting on that holiday weight can really give you the blues.

Don't despair. Gaining weight during the holidays is not inevitable. You can enjoy your holiday meals and still face that scale with confidence by the New Year. One way you can do that is by moving your resolution date up two months and making a November Resolution to "Maintain No Gain" this holiday season.

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Green Bean Casserole

Ingredients

3 to 4 medium shallots, in their skins
Kosher salt, plus 1 1/2 teaspoons
1-pound fresh green beans, stemmed, and halved crosswise
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
8 ounces cremini mushrooms, sliced (about 4 cups)
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 1/2 cups mushroom, vegetable, or chicken broth (see Cook's Note)
3 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves
Freshly ground black pepper
Vegetable cooking spray
1 cup fresh breadcrumbs

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Put the shallots (in their skins) on a small baking dish, roast until soft, about 30 minutes. When cool enough to handle, skin and coarsely chop the shallots. Set aside.
2. Bring a medium-large saucepan of water to a boil over high heat. Add kosher salt, to taste. Add the green beans, and cook, uncovered, until crisp-tender and bright green, about 3 minutes. Drain the beans in a colander and rinse with cold water. Transfer the beans to a large bowl.
3. In the same saucepan, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the mushrooms, season with 1 teaspoon salt, cook, stirring occasionally, until browned, about 7 minutes. Add the mushrooms to the beans.
4. Melt the butter in a small saucepan over medium heat. Add the flour and cook, stirring with a wooden spoon, until golden, about 2 minutes. Slowly whisk in the broth, increase the heat to high, and bring to a boil. Add the shallots, 1 teaspoon of the thyme, and remaining 1/2 teaspoon of salt. Reduce the heat to maintain a simmer and cook until thickened, stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes. Pour the sauce over the vegetables and stir to combine evenly.
5. Spray a 2-quart baking dish with vegetable cooking spray. Transfer the vegetable mixture to the pan. Add the remaining 2 teaspoons of thyme to breadcrumbs and scatter over the vegetables. Bake uncovered until the sauce bubbles and the crumbs brown, about 20 minutes.