

## Food safety tips for a successful buffet

### How to *not* give your office food poisoning at the holiday party

Most offices host some sort of get-together this time of year and you may be asked to bring a dish. If you're not bringing food to the office, you may be bringing something to a get-together with family or friends. Follow these tips to be sure your diners remember your nice contribution, instead of a naughty case of food poisoning.



## Calendar

### Dec. 25-26

- Health department closed for Christmas

### Jan. 1

- Health department closed New Year's Day

### Jan. 5

- Safe Kids Marion meeting

### Jan. 7

- WIC Mom & Baby Club meeting

### Jan. 14

- WIC Breastfeeding class

### Jan. 19

- Health department closed for Martin Luther King Day

### Jan. 21

- Racial Harmony Task Force meeting at Ocala Police Department

**Tip 1: Keep hot food hot.** Hot items are best served immediately after cooking or reheating. If you plan on serving a hot item at the office party, take it straight from the oven and either place it in an insulated bag or hot food carrier. If you can't serve it as soon as you arrive, return it to the oven. Alternatively, you can completely chill the item and transport it according to Tip 2. Once you arrive at the office reheat it using a microwave, stove, or oven to 165 degrees F.

**Tip 2: Keep cold food cold.** Cold items should remain in the refrigerator for as long as possible. When transporting cold dishes, place items in a cooler with plenty of ice or frozen gel packs. A refrigerator thermometer in the cooler is a useful way to make sure items remain at proper chill temperature of 40 degrees F or below.

**Tip 3: Use several small platters.** For both hot and cold items, arrange and serve food on several small platters rather than on large platter. This way you can hold food at safe temperatures (cold foods below 40 degrees F and hot foods above 140) until partygoers are ready to eat it.

**Tip 4: Keep track of time.** Keep track of how long items have been sitting on the buffet table and discard anything out longer than two hours. You never want to leave perishable foods, such as meat, poultry, eggs and casseroles in the "danger zone" over two hours. The danger zone is between 40 and 140 degrees F where bacteria multiply rapidly. After two hours, enough bacteria may have grown in your food to make partygoers sick. Exceptions to the danger zone include ready-to-eat items like cookies, crackers, bread and whole fruit.

If you follow these tips, those enjoying your dish will not suffer a bout of food poisoning.

# Deck the halls without the falls

## Falls are the leading cause of injury-related hospital admissions in Florida

While the holiday season is a time of merriment, it can bring household injuries such as fires, electrical shocks and falls.

In fact, falls are the leading cause of injury-related hospital admissions in Florida, with approximately 70 percent of fall-related injuries occurring within or around the home. The most common falls are slips, trips, and stumbles. Falls from ladders, beds and stairs are also common.

Add a few safety points to your to-do list before you start unloading the holiday storage boxes from the attic. It can save you from a decorating disaster or holiday bruises.



- When you are carrying heavy items, always lift with your legs to avoid a back injury.
- When hanging decorations inside or outside, don't use the nearest storage bin as a step stool. Use a sturdy ladder with a friend's help.
- Keep the tree away from the fireplace and be sure it has plenty of water. Giving your tree that holiday glow is great, but a dried-out tree is a sure fire hazard!
- When you unpack your lights, check for broken bulbs. If they are damaged, toss them. And don't plug too many strands together. That could lead to shock or fire.
- Place your candles out of the reach of children and pets and away from window drapes or curtains.

### Fast Facts

**Safe holiday tips:**

- Lift with your legs
- Use a ladder
- Keep indoor trees moist
- Candles out of reach
- Choking hazards out of reach
- Keep swimming pool secure

- Avoid setting small decorations that may look like candy within the reach of young children.
- Food is guaranteed to be at the center of attention when the family arrives. Keep an eye on the cooking to keep the smoke alarm silent and fire at bay.
- Be sure that your swimming pool is secure. Even during the winter a drowning can happen in the time it takes to check a dish in the oven. For tips, check out [www.waterprooffl.com](http://www.waterprooffl.com).

Don't spoil one of the most wonderful times of the year by cutting corners on safety. Have a happy and safe holiday!

*Florida Department of Health*

### Need Info? Call 352-629-0137

**Birth & Death Certificates** ext. 2064  
**Communicable Diseases** ext. 2088  
**Dental Clinic** 352-622-2664  
**Environmental Health** ext. 2086

**Family Planning** ext. 2091  
**Health Education** ext. 2195  
**Healthy Start** ext. 2275  
**HIV/AIDS** ext. 2073  
**Immunizations** ext. 2017

**Maternity** ext. 2089  
**School Health** ext. 2043  
**Sexually Transmitted Diseases** ext. 2073  
**WIC & Nutrition** ext. 2124

## 12 Days of Wellness

### Tips for a happier, healthier holiday season

The stockings are hung by the chimney with care, the final touches have been added to the tree, the gifts are wrapped and ready, candles are lit, and the feast is cooking, ready for your family to arrive at any minute. This week can be one of the busiest of the year and also the easiest to let your wellness goals be shuffled aside. Keep in mind these twelve wellness tips to help maintain your weight and end the year feeling great!

- 12. Limit alcohol**—a few toasts here, a glass of wine there, and several beers later can add up to a lot of extra calories. The alcohol can also lower your inhibitions and make you forget that you are trying to maintain your weight.
- 11. Control your stress**—relax, get plenty of sleep, and use some stress relieving techniques.
- 10. Remember what the holidays are about**—friends, family, and community. Those holiday goodies are nice, but they aren't the spirit of the season. Enjoy what is most important to you, the ones you love.
- 9. Keep track**—keeping a log or food diary this week will help you be mindful of what you are eating. You may not want that second piece of pie if you know you have to write it down.
- 8. Prepare healthy foods at home**—you can't always control what you encounter at someone else's home or at parties, but you can control what is in your own house. Make the foods on your table the healthy ones.
- 7. Practice moderation**—watch your portion size and the number of portions you eat. You can enjoy your favorite treats, just don't overindulge.
- 6. Ask for help**—do you have a lot to do this week and feel like you will never check everything off your list? Ask your friends and family to help.
- 5. Don't forget the activity**—try to work in some sort of activity daily. You can enjoy some extra playtime with your kids, take a walk around the neighborhood, or walk the mall. By adding 30 to 60 minutes of activity to your day, you will help maintain your weight and have some fun too.
- 4. Accept imperfection**—if you overeat one day or miss a workout, you can always start fresh the next day. Add a few extra minutes on to your workout or make a promise to eat healthy, but whatever it is, be proud of your accomplishments and keep moving forward.
- 3. Plan ahead**—have a plan and stick to it. If you don't know how to maintain your weight this week, chances are it will be very hard to actually do it. But if you know the steps you can take to make it through this last week, you can achieve your goal.
- 2. Enjoy yourself**—find happiness, peace, and joy this season. You deserve it.
- 1. Choose To Be a Better You**—with everything going on this week it can be hard to remember what is important to you and how hard you have worked this season to get this far. Take time every day to pat yourself on the back, recharge and refocus on you. Your decision to be healthy will benefit you this holiday season and for many seasons to come.

It's not too late to join the challenge for a healthier holiday. Find out more about the Eat Smart, Move More, Maintain, Don't Gain! Holiday Challenge at [www.esmmweighless.com](http://www.esmmweighless.com).



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