

## HOWELL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

# Monthly Monitor

VOLUME 268

DECEMBER 2024

### DECEMBER CALENDAR

WIC: 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11,  
13, 16, 18, 19, 20, 23, 27,  
30, 31

Willow Springs WIC: 4

Mountain View WIC: 17

Family Planning: 5, 12, 18,  
19

Immunizations: 3, 10, 31

Food Handlers: 2

Holiday's (closed): 25th,  
26th Christmas

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### Clinic Hours:

Monday-Friday 8-12 & 1-5,  
closed for lunch 12-1

### Administration Hours

Monday-Friday 8-5

## Holiday Stress? from [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org)

If the holidays sometimes leave you feeling overwhelmed and out of control, you're not alone. And if the Grinch has stolen your spirit and good intentions, try some of these tips to reclaim your ho-ho-ho and stay happy and healthy.

**1. Keep up healthy habits:** Make a pact with yourself during the holidays. Decide that you'll move more and do something active every day over the next three weeks. Take it a step further, and pledge to start the day with a healthy breakfast, limit the sweets and get at least seven hours of sleep each night. If you don't completely give up your healthy habits, you won't feel like you have to start over once the holidays are over.

**2. Beware of seasonal sweets:** The holidays often dish up extra helpings of less-than-healthy treats. Try preparing healthy snacks that are ready to eat when

the urge to snack strikes. If you're hosting a holiday party, challenge yourself to make delicious and healthier options using our recipes and cooking tips.

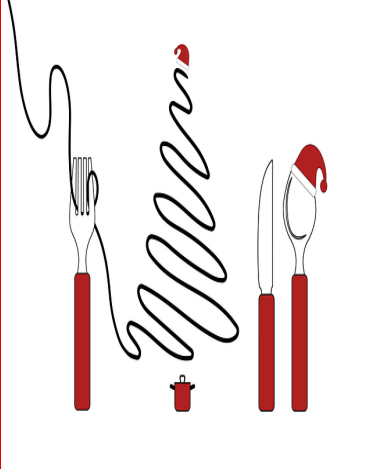


**3. Stay active:** Instead of beating yourself up about missing a workout, sprinkle some healthy activities into your daily routine. For example, if the weather isn't too frightful and you're working from home, ride your bike around your neighborhood during a lunch break. If dinner is going to be a feast, opt for a light lunch, then take a vigorous walk. And keep the family moving. When the kids are home from school, squeeze in some active chores and trips to the park.

**4. Take time for yourself:** Give yourself the gift of peace. If you need some downtime to recharge, declare a "me-treat" and do something that relaxes you. Try yoga, meditation or spending time in nature.

**5. Make a plan for the new year:** Your poinsettia's pooped and the gifts are all gone. Now what? It's a great time to reset for the new year – but don't go dashing through your to-do list too fast, or you might not stick to your plan. Lay out realistic, sustainable steps for the months ahead. For example, start a daily walking routine and sign up for a Heart Walk before you set your sights on that marathon.

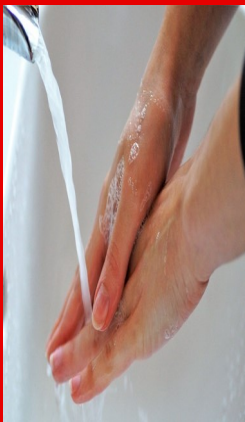
*Howell County  
Health Department  
staff would like to wish every-  
one a very Happy,  
Healthy Merry  
Christmas and  
Holiday Season!*



**Keep food safe  
this Holiday  
Season!**

**Holiday meals can  
have a large amount  
of calories.**

**Wash  
hands with  
soap and  
water be-  
fore and  
after  
handling  
food.**



## Holiday Food Safety from Justin Frazier, EPHS

Feasting with family is part of many holiday celebrations. Follow these tips to help prevent food poisoning, or foodborne illness, during the holidays.

**Keep foods separated:** Keep meat, chicken, turkey, seafood, and eggs separate from all other foods at the grocery store and in the refrigerator. Prevent juices from meat, chicken, turkey, and seafood from dripping or leaking onto other foods by keeping them in containers or sealed plastic bags. Store eggs in their original car-

ton in the main compartment of the refrigerator. **Cook food thoroughly:** Meat, chicken, turkey, seafood, and eggs can carry germs that cause food poisoning. Use a food thermometer to ensure these foods have been cooked to a safe internal temperature. Roasts, chops, steaks, and fresh ham should rest for 3 minutes after you remove them from the oven or grill. **Thaw your turkey safely:** Thaw turkey in the refrigerator, in a sink of cold water (change the water every 30 minutes), or in the mi-

crowave. Avoid thawing foods on the counter. A turkey must thaw at a safe temperature to prevent harmful germs from growing rapidly. **Keep food out of the “danger zone”:** Bacteria can grow rapidly in the danger zone between 40°F and 140°F. After food is prepared, keep hot food hot and cold food cold. Refrigerate or freeze any perishable food within 2 hours. The temperature in your refrigerator should be set at or below 40°F and the freezer at or below 0°F.

## Reducing Holiday Meal Calories from April Bridges, WIC Nutritionist

The amount of fat and calories consumed in an average holiday meal is staggering. Here are a few tips that can help to reduce that number. Find more tips like these at [EatRight.org](http://EatRight.org)

- Using 2 egg whites to replace 1 egg reduces cholesterol without af-

fecting taste.

- Low sodium vegetable broth adds flavor to potatoes and helps cut back added butter or margarine.
- Oil or margarine can be replaced with applesauce in quick breads or muffins.
- Sliced almonds can replace fried onion rings for a crunchy topping.

- Eat a small meal or snack beforehand. Starving yourself can temp you to overeat.
- Pass up those foods that really don't interest you, so you can savor the foods to enjoy.
- Move socializing away from food to reduce unconscious nibbling.

## Worldwide Food Service Safety Month from Monica Childers, LPN

Worldwide Food Service Safety Month is celebrated every December to raise awareness of food safety and promote best practices in the food service industry. The National Restaurant Association (NRA) created the month in 1994 through its philanthropic foundation, the National Restaurant Association Educational Foun-

dation (NRAEF). Some ways to observe Worldwide Food Service Safety Month include: Washing hands with soap and warm water before and after handling food; Washing fruits and vegetables thoroughly with clean, warm water; Keeping cooked and raw foods separate to avoid cross-

contamination. Here at the Howell County Health Department, we do investigations into a variety of foodborne illnesses every year. With the holidays we just want to send out a reminder to ensure correct storage, cooking, and serving of foods. We wish you all a safe and healthy holiday season!



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**Public Health: Prevent. Promote. Protect.**

The mission of the Howell County Health Department is to improve, promote and protect the health of Howell County through awareness, assessment, planning and assurance in order that our community may achieve their fullest health potential.



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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MERRY  
Christmas!