



AAPCC NEWS RELEASE

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Joint Statement: American Association of Poison Control Centers and USDA Provide Food Safety Recommendations for Super Bowl Sunday

Alexandria, VA– As millions of Americans prepare for Super Bowl celebrations on Sunday, the American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC) and the United State Department of Agriculture (USDA) encourage the public to take a few simple food safety precautions to prevent food poisoning.

“While the Super Bowl is a time for families and friends to gather, watch football, and enjoy a meal or snacks together, it is also a time when professionals at the nation’s poison control centers are especially concerned about the increased risk of food poisoning,” said Stephen T. Kaminski, JD, AAPCC CEO and Executive Director. “By taking a few extra precautions when preparing, cooking, and storing food, you can assure that you and your loved ones have a delicious and safe celebration.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), an estimated 1 in 6, or 48 million people contract food poisoning each year, with approximately 128,000 of those people being hospitalized and 3,000 dying of illnesses associated with food poisoning. America’s 55 poison control centers play an important role in helping to prevent food poisoning by promoting safe food preparation and storage strategies, as well as assisting callers who suspect they are at risk of developing foodborne illness or are exhibiting symptoms of food poisoning. “By saving the Poison Help line, 1-800-222-1222, in your mobile telephone, you always have a poison control expert available at the touch of your fingertips,” said Kaminski. “The experts at poison control centers provide free and confidential information and treatment advice 24 hours per day, seven days a week, year-round.”

Symptoms of food poisoning usually appear within hours of eating contaminated food, and often include nausea, vomiting, abdominal pains, and diarrhea. Food poisoning symptoms can last anywhere from a few hours to several days. While most food poisoning cases are mild and resolve without medical care, some episodes can be more severe and require expert treatment advice.

AAPCC and the USDA offer the following food safety tips for preparing and enjoying your Super Bowl meals:

PREPARE:

- Keep meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs separate from all other foods in your grocery bags, in the refrigerator, and while prepping.

- Wash your hands, kitchen surfaces, utensils, and cutting boards frequently, especially after handling or preparing uncooked food and before touching or eating other foods. Wash produce but not eggs, meat, or poultry, which can spread harmful bacteria.
- Use the microwave, cold water, or the refrigerator to defrost your frozen meat or poultry. Do not thaw or marinate these items on the counter, and be sure to cook them immediately after thawing.

COOK:

- The bacteria that cause food poisoning multiply quickest in the ‘Danger Zone,’ which is between 40° and 140° Fahrenheit. In general, keep hot food hot, and cold food cold.
- Use a food thermometer to check if meat is fully cooked and heated high enough to kill harmful bacteria. Cook raw beef, pork, lamb and veal steaks, chops, and roasts to 145° Fahrenheit. Cook raw ground beef, pork, lamb, and veal to 160° Fahrenheit. Cook raw poultry to 165° Fahrenheit.
- After cooking is complete, allow meat to rest for several minutes before cutting or consuming.

STORE:

- Refrigerate leftovers promptly – within two hours – at 40° Fahrenheit or below to help reduce the risk of bacterial growth.
- Prevent cross-contamination by completely and securely covering foods in the refrigerator.
- Consume or freeze leftovers within 3-4 days.

During the excitement of sporting events, alcohol safety is also an important consideration. Alcohol affects children differently than it does adults, and swallowing even a little can be very toxic to a child, causing severely low blood sugar and distress to a child’s central nervous system. Alcohol found in mouthwash, hand sanitizers, and other personal care products can also cause alcohol poisoning, so it is important to also keep these products up and away from children.

For more food poisoning prevention tips and resources, visit AAPCC’s Food & Mushroom Poisoning Prevention webpage at <http://www.aapcc.org/prevention/food-mushroom-poisoning/>.

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About American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC)

AAPCC supports the nation’s 55 poison center members in their efforts to treat and prevent drug, consumer product, animal, environmental and food poisoning. Members staff the Poison Help hotline at 1-800-222-1222 that provides free, confidential, expert medical advice 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year from toxicology specialists, including nurses, pharmacists, physicians and poison information providers. In addition, AAPCC maintains the only poison information and surveillance database in the United States, providing real-time monitoring of unusual poisoning patterns, chemical exposures and other emerging public health hazards. AAPCC partners with federal agencies such as HRSA, CDC, FDA and EPA, as well as private industry. **Be prepared for a poisoning emergency and download poison control’s contact information today. Text “poison” to 797979 to save the number in your phone.**