

# Dangerous leftovers? Food safety tips for holidays from Banner Health experts

One in six Americans get a foodborne illness every year

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“Leftovers is a big one (when it comes to food illness)”

(Nov. 25, 2019) – We gather during the holidays to give thanks and spread good cheer – not to spread salmonella. By following some simple food-safety tips you can avoid any foodborne illnesses this holiday season, say Banner Health safety experts.

Foodborne illness hits one in six Americans every year, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says. About 128,000 people end up in the hospital while 3,000 die annually.

“Leftovers is a big one (issue),” says Tracey Fejt, trauma prevention coordinator for Banner Health. “We do have food left out on the table and it’s important to get any of it back into the refrigerator within a two-hour period.” Fejt (pronounced “fate”) helps manage trauma prevention efforts at Cardon Children’s Medical Center, Banner – University Medical Center Phoenix and Banner Thunderbird Medical Center.

## [Fejt's comments are available on high-res B-roll](#)

In addition to the “two-hour rule for leftovers”, other food-safety tips include:

- **Separate, please:** Keep raw and cooked food separated; use different utensils and cutting surfaces for each of them.
- **No double dipping while cooking:** If you are tasting your food, make sure you wash off the spoon or a use another one before you go back for another sample.
- **Be careful of bacteria:** Fully cook meats and poultry, and thoroughly wash raw vegetables and fruits.
- **Thaw thoughtfully:** Always thaw meat in the refrigerator, never on the counter top.
- **Hand hygiene:** Wash your hands frequently and make sure your children do the same.

Children under the age of five; adults who are 65 years and older, pregnant women and people with compromised immune systems are more likely to get a food-related illness and have more serious complications from it.

Symptoms of severe food poisoning include:

- High fever (temperature over 102°F)
- Bloody stools
- Frequent vomiting that prevents keeping liquids down, which can lead to dehydration
- Diarrhea that lasts more than three days
- Dehydration, which causes symptoms such as dry mouth and throat, feeling dizzy when standing up, and little or no urination

## About Banner Health

Headquartered in Arizona, Banner Health is one of the largest nonprofit health care systems in the country. The system owns and operates 28 acute-care hospitals, Banner Health Network, Banner – University Medicine, academic and employed physician groups, long-term care centers, outpatient surgery centers and an array of other services; including Banner Urgent Care, family clinics, home care and hospice services, pharmacies and a nursing registry. Banner Health is in six states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Nebraska, Nevada and Wyoming. For more information, visit [www.BannerHealth.com](http://www.BannerHealth.com).

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