

NHS advice on food safety

NHS 24 is reminding people to be vigilant about food safety this Christmas.

The call comes as part of NHSScotland's Be #Healthwise This Winter campaign which aims to help people protect their friends and family from illness over the festive and winter period.



Professor George Crooks is NHS 24's Medical Director: "No one likes to feel unwell, especially at Christmas, so we encourage people to not only be prepared for any minor ailments but also to make sure that people know how to avoid easily preventable health issues.

"For example, that could be as simple keeping raw and cooked meats apart to the more simple problem of over indulgence leading to stomach pains or hangovers. Cooking food properly is just one part of the equation, making sure a frozen turkey or other meat is defrosted safely is just as vital. Defrost too quickly and you can give bacteria a great breeding ground. Make sure you use a separate chopping board when preparing raw meat and wash it thoroughly afterwards. Likewise, we shouldn't wash poultry as it can do more harm than good, splashing bacteria around your kitchen. But you should wash your hands – especially after handling raw food



"For those concerned about drinking over the holidays, the best way to treat a hangover is to avoid getting one! Alcohol causes the body to dehydrate and can have an impact on overall energy levels. It makes it easier for regular drinkers to catch colds, plus alcohol is quite calorific so it can be a significant contributor to weight gain.

“If you are out for a long night or party, try to alternate alcoholic drinks with water or fruit juice and have something to eat before you go out. If you do find yourself suffering the morning after the night before, isotonic drinks to replace lost sugars and minerals combined with rest and paracetamol, easier on the stomach than aspirin or ibuprofen, is the best cure.”



General advice and information on how to stay healthy this winter can be found at www.nhsinform.co.uk along with a handy A-Z of illnesses. You can also like our page on Facebook (search NHS 24) and follow us on Twitter @NHS24