

# Health

## Consumers Urged to Handle Food Safely

A few precautions will ensure that your holiday menus are healthy

BY DR. GRANT HIGGINSON

Salmonella and listeria are not on anyone's holiday menu but mishandling food can leave your main dish tainted and your eggnog nauseating.

Whether you are cooking a family meal, preparing a dish for the office party or ordering perishable items on the Internet, you can take precautions to ensure your food arrives safely and your holiday remains healthy.

Some people may become very ill after ingesting only a few harmful bacteria while others may remain symptom free after ingesting thousands. Very young children, the elderly, pregnant women and people with compromised immune systems are at greatest risk from bacteria that can cause foodborne illness.

Most cases of foodborne illness can be prevented just by following two very important rules: keep hot food hot and cold food cold, and keep everything in the kitchen clean.

Sound easy?

As consumers, we often break the food safety rules.

When you last traveled to a



*Most cases of foodborne illness can be prevented just by following two very important rules: keep hot food hot and cold food cold, and keep everything in the kitchen clean.*

—Dr. Grant Higginson, Oregon public health officer

friend's or relative's home that was more than two hours away, did you keep the food you were bringing at the recommended temperature? Have you gone to a holiday gathering where food has been left out longer than two hours? Do you have designated cutting boards for preparing raw meat and vegetables? How often do you use a thermometer when you are cooking?

Follow the four C's of safety: clean, chill, cook and don't cross-contaminate. Most bacteria get into

food through careless handling.

Raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs are not sterile. Neither is fresh produce such as lettuce, tomatoes, sprouts and melons. Foods, including safely cooked, ready-to-eat foods, can become cross-contaminated with bacteria transferred from raw products, meat juices or other contaminated products, or from food handlers with poor personal hygiene.

Here are some tips to keep food safe:

Wash your hands before and

after handling food.

Wash towels and wash cloths in the hot water cycle of the washing machine. Bacteria can linger in those used repeatedly between launderings.

Wash countertops and utensils with hot, soapy water between each step in food preparation.

Do not use wooden utensils or cutting boards to prepare raw meat. These surfaces are not smooth and can harbor bacteria in the ridges.

Cook meat and poultry to the recommended temperature.

For example, the temperature for turkey should register 180 degrees when a thermometer is inserted into the center of the thickest part of the thigh, breast or stuffing.

If you don't have a cooking thermometer, invest in one.

There is nothing festive about foodborne illness. Take the simple steps necessary to keep your family and guests healthy and this unwanted guest off your holiday menu.

Grant Higginson, M.D., is the state public health officer in the Oregon Department of Human Services.

## Teen Pregnancies Fall Again

Oregon's teen pregnancy rate continued its downward trend last year, according to new data released by public health officials in the Oregon Department of Human Services.

"In the past 10 years, teen pregnancies have decreased by more than one-third, so we've made good progress," said Sue Abrams, DHS teen pregnancy prevention coordinator.

This is the sixth year of decline for pregnancies to teens aged 15 to 17 and the fourth

year for those aged 18 and 19, according to Abrams.

"However, the sobering fact remains that there were 66 births and 56 abortions to girls between 10 and 14 years old. We still have work to do," she said.

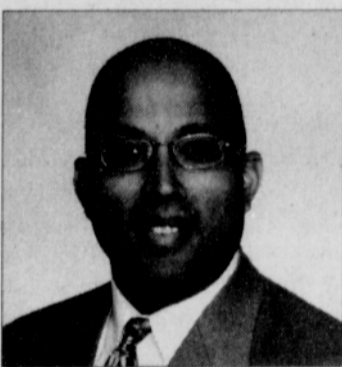
The data is contained in the newly published Oregon Vital Statistics Annual Report for 2001, which also provides other data for mothers of all ages.

## Heath Finance Pro Leads Kaiser

Murcus C. Mundy of northeast Portland has been named a vice president and regional compliance officer for Kaiser Permanente.

Mundy will be responsible for ensuring Kaiser's northwest region is in compliance with federal and state regulations.

He most recently was a health care finance and operations consultant. Prior to that he worked for the



Marcus Mundy

accounting and professional services firm KPMG in Portland, and for several other national and regional health care entities.

Originally from Los Angeles, Mundy holds a degree in business management from Howard University in Washington, D.C. He and his wife, Leslye, have three daughters and a son. They reside in the Irvington neighborhood.

## Statewide LEADLINE Introduced

Offers information about lead hazards

A new lead poisoning hotline will provide over the phone help to Oregonians across the state who may be concerned that their children are at risk.

Especially dangerous to children under the age of 6, lead poisoning can cause permanent brain damage, learning difficulties, behavioral problems amongst other health problems. The condition is caused primarily by swallowing or inhaling lead, usually in the form of lead dust.

The main source of lead poisoning is the lead paint found in houses built before 1978, which can chip, peel and break down, creating lead dust which contaminates the environment. The risk of contamination is even greater during times of repairs and

remodeling. Mel Kohn, M.D., a state epidemiologist in the Department of Human Services, said nationwide about one in 20 children under six are lead poisoned. In Oregon, more than 100 young children are identified with elevated blood lead levels each year.

"The good news is that lead poisoning is completely preventable if hazards are detected and removed," Kohn said.

The hotline is staffed with trained operators who can explain where lead can be found and how it can be controlled. They can tell callers what help may be available in their community.

The statewide Leadline at 800-368-5060 is an expansion of an existing Multnomah County poisoning helpline at 503-988-4000.

## The Instant Holiday Gift

PCC TUITION BUCKS

- More than 1,000 courses to choose from, including credits that transfer to just about any university.
- Sold in \$10, \$25, and \$100 amounts in an attractive folder.
- A great gift idea for parents, grandparents, family friends, aunts and uncles.



Call 503-977-4234 to order by phone. We'll mail your certificates to you the next business day or sooner.



## Celebrate the Season

Festive holiday get-togethers are more fun and less worry with our deli...

**Complete Holiday Dinners**  
Place Your Order at the Deli Today!

Choose from:

- Traditional Turkey • Spiral Sliced Ham
- Prime Rib

Just heat & serve.

Call Your Holiday Hotline Today:  
1-866-473-8209

Visit Safeway's Web site at [www.safeway.com](http://www.safeway.com)

Available at Safeway:

PRICES EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 2002						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
15	16	17	11	12	13	14

Items & prices in this ad are available at your local Safeway store. Not all items available in all markets. Some items may be limited or subject to availability. Not responsible for typographical or printing errors. We reserve the right to cancel all printed offers. On Buy One Get One Free (BOGO) offers, customer must purchase the first item to receive the second item. \$5.00 off per 10 year olds. Excludes all other items. Manufacturer's coupons may be used on purchased items only - not on this item. ©2002 Safeway Stores, Inc.

**Any Size Package!**

**Foster Farms Fresh Whole Fryer**  
Any size package.  
SAVE up to 94¢ lb.  
**55¢ lb.**  
Safeway Club Price

**Ashley Farms Smoked Whole or Shank Half Ham**  
Or Butt Half Ham, \$117 lb. Bone-in.  
SAVE up to \$1.22 lb.  
**97¢ lb.**  
Safeway Club Price

**Campbell's SELECT Soup**  
18.6 to 19-oz. Selected Ready to Serve varieties.  
Limit 6.  
SAVE up to \$4.37 on 3  
**3 for \$4**  
Safeway Club Price

**Sweet Red or Golden Delicious Apples**  
Excellent dessert with sharp cheese.  
SAVE up to \$1.58 on 2 lbs.  
**2 lbs for \$1**  
Safeway Club Price

Now the savings are in the Card!

ALL LIMITS ARE PER HOUSEHOLD PER DAY!