



November 2016

Ola Lokahi

Creating a Healthy Hawaii Together

The mission of the Department of Health is to protect and improve the health and environment for all people in Hawaii. We believe that an optimal state of physical, mental, social and environmental well-being is a right and responsibility of all of Hawaii's people.

A Message from Virginia Pressler, MD, Director of Health

Healthy Holidays to You and Your Family!



In the Islands, we celebrate the holidays in different ways, honoring various traditions. The holidays can be a challenging time for many of us, with a range of different demands.

There are many things that can cause more stress during this time of the year. There are potlucks and events to attend. Traffic and shopping. Cleaning and entertaining. Baking and cooking for family and

friends. It can be exhausting and leave us weary.

At the Hawaii State Department of Health, we do much more than wish good health for people. We provide solid guidance and recommendations for Hawaii residents to take responsibility for their health to stay healthy during the holidays and throughout the year.

Here are some practical tips for body, mind and spirit to help minimize stress so that you can enjoy the holidays

Don't abandon healthy habits.

Don't let the holidays become an excuse for not adhering to the good things that you are doing to stay healthy. Overindulgence will add to your stress. Get plenty of sleep; incorporate regular physical activity into each day, and have a healthy snack before holiday parties so that you don't go overboard on sweets. And always remember to Rethink Your Drink!

Be realistic and open to positive change. Drop idealized notions of

perfect families and perfect holidays. The holidays don't have to be perfect. As families change, traditions and rituals often change, too. Hold on to a few traditions, but be willing to let others go and be open to creating new ones.

Plan ahead. Avoid last-minute scrambling through traffic and crowded malls. Set aside specific days for shopping, baking, visiting friends and other activities. Be sure to line up help for party preparation and cleanup.

Learn to say no. Do not feel you must participate in every holiday event that you are invited to attend. Your family and friends will understand if you say, "no." If you always say "yes," you may feel overwhelmed and resentful. If it's not possible to say "no," remove something else from your agenda to make up for the lost time.

Take a breather. Make some time for yourself. Spending just 15 minutes alone without distractions may refresh you enough to handle every-

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Thaddeus Pham Receives HAH's 2016 Public Health Award



Congratulations to **Thaddeus Pham**, Adult Viral Hepatitis Coordinator with the Hawaii Department of Health, who received the Public Health Award from the Healthcare Association of Hawaii at its 2016 Awards & Scholarship Gala held at Kō'olau Ballrooms on October 29.

Thaddeus has been with the Harm Reduction Service Branch of the Communicable Disease and Public Health Nursing Division since he joined the Department of Health as an HIV counselor/tester in 2007. The branch was previously known as the STD/AIDS Prevention Branch but integrated hepatitis prevention since those who are behaviorally at risk for HIV and STD may also be at risk for Hepatitis B and C.

Track Record of Accomplishments

Thaddeus was recognized for his numerous public health accomplishments.

- In 2011, Thaddeus was promoted to the branch's Adult Viral Hepatitis Coordinator.
- In 2012, Thaddeus was awarded a place in the very competitive Minority Leadership Development Program of the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors in Washington D.C., earning the distinction of being the first Asian-American participant.
- In 2015, he received the Hep B Champion Award from the

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Hep B United and later the Hep B Superhero Award from San Francisco Hep B Free for his passionate work to increase Hepatitis B virus education, testing, and immunization in Hawaii and nationally, particularly for Asian- and Pacific Island-born individuals.

- In 2016, Thaddeus was presented with the Hepatitis Testing Innovation Award for Hep Free Hawaii from European Association for Study of Liver at the Global Hepatitis conference in Glasgow, Scotland.
- In addition, Thaddeus was on the cover of the October 2016 edition of *hep Voice*, a publication of the Hepatitis World Alliance. He made all of Hawaii proud.



An Outstanding Communicator

"Thaddeus is an outstanding communicator supporting development of hepatitis websites, posters, media releases and community health fairs for populations at risk. His enthusiasm and enjoyment for his public health work is infectious and attracts new supporters and friends," said **Peter Whiticar**, Chief of the Harm Reduction Service Branch. "These include student interns from

UH who have provided excellent analysis of hepatitis C data to inform program decisions."

Excellent Collaboration

The success of Thaddeus' work depends on collaboration and support of the Disease Outbreak and Control Division and partner agencies. He has established strong working relationships with pharmacies and pharmacists, community health centers, health care providers, and community agencies serving Pacific Islanders, homeless, substance users and underserved populations.

Thaddeus co-founded Hep Free Hawaii with Heather Lusk of the CHOW Project in 2011, which required extensive collaboration. This non-profit has led Hawaii's hepatitis prevention efforts bringing together patients, advocates, providers and public health professionals to advocate, educate and support efforts to end hepatitis transmission in Hawaii.

Making a Difference

"Thaddeus has shown us that a single individual can make a difference in public health but when joined by colleagues and supporters, we can make a lasting difference in the health of Hawaii's people," Peter added.

In addition to his work with the Department of Health, Thaddeus serves on the board of directors for several local and national hepatitis organizations.

Sanitation Branch:

Safe Holiday Cooking and Eating Tips

Here in the Islands, we celebrate the holidays with potlucks with friends and family. However, home buffets, where food is left out for long periods of time, leave the door open for uninvited guests – bacteria that cause foodborne illness. Here are some tips to keep you safe and healthy during the holidays to avoid food poisoning.

Planning and Shopping

- When doing multiple errands, shop for your groceries last and do not leave perishable foods in the car. Bring a cooler with ice or ice substitute to store your milk and other perishables, especially if you have a long commute home, or if you have other stops to make. Place all perishables in your refrigerator or freezer as soon as you get home!
- Make sure that both you and the grocery store bag all raw meats and poultry separate from all other foods to prevent blood and other raw meat juices from contaminating any other foods.
- Thaw frozen turkey four to five days in advance safely in your refrigerator. You can also thaw or defrost a small turkey in the microwave if you are going to cook it immediately after thawing.
- You may also thaw a turkey in a sink. After cleaning the sink, put the turkey in a heavy plastic freezer bag secured with a twist tie. Cover the bird with cold



water, changing the water every 30 minutes. Depending on the size of your turkey, this will take from 4 to 12 hours.

Safe Food Handling

- Always wash your hands with soap and water before and after handling any food, especially after handling any raw meats or poultry. Raw meats and poultry may be contaminated with harmful bacteria.
- Try to handle or prepare all raw meats and poultry at the same time so you don't cross-contaminate ready to eat foods or other food items during their preparation.
- Always serve food on clean plates, trays, or platters – never re-use containers or plates that

were previously used to hold or prepare raw poultry or meats.

Cook Meats and Poultry Thoroughly by Using a Thermometer

- If you are cooking foods ahead of time for your party be sure to cook foods thoroughly to safe temperatures. When taking temperatures, make sure that the tip of the probe is in the center of the thickest portion of meat being checked.
- Cook beef, veal and lamb to an internal temperature of at least 145°F. Bake whole poultry to 165°F, and ground turkey and all other poultry to 165°F. All other meats, ground red meats and fish not intended to be eaten raw should be cooked to 155°F.

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Healthy Holidays

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thing you need to do. Find something that reduces stress by clearing your mind, slowing your breathing and restoring inner calm.

A breather from being constantly connected will also restore your soul. Constant cell phone buzzes and email alerts may keep you in a perpetual fight-or-flight mode. This adds to your stress level. Turn off your mobile devices so that you can really be present with your family and friends during the holidays.

Get connected in new ways. If you feel lonely or isolated, seek out community, religious or other social events. They can offer support and companionship. Volunteering your time to help others also is a good way to lift your spirits and broaden your friendships.

Boost your immune system.

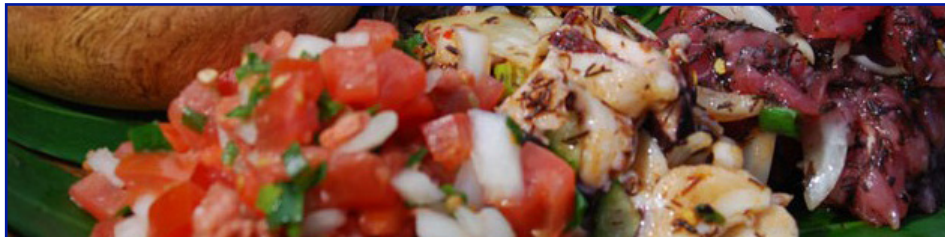
During the holiday season, you're more likely to be stressed out by obligations and errands. Your immune system may be under assault, especially during the flu season. The holiday stress makes it harder to cope with your family than it might be at other times of the year. Get rest, and remember to get your flu shot!

Seek professional help.

The Hawaii State Department of Health is a champion of mental health. Despite your best efforts, you may find yourself feeling persistently sad or anxious, plagued by physical ailments, unable to sleep, irritable and hopeless, and unable to face routine chores. If these feelings last for a while, talk to your provider or a mental health professional.

Sanitation Branch:

Safe Holiday Eating Tips



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Use Shallow Containers

Try not to cook more food than your kitchen's refrigerator/freezer and oven can handle.

If you are cooking large amounts of food in advance, divide cooked food into shallow containers to store in the refrigerator or freezer until serving. This encourages rapid, even cooling. Reheat hot foods rapidly to 165°F. Keep the rest of the food hot in the oven (set at 200-250°F), or cold in the refrigerator until serving time.

Thoroughly Wash All Fruits and Vegetables

Always be sure to thoroughly wash all fruits and vegetables prior to preparation and serving. Rinse all fresh fruits and vegetables, including those with skins and rinds that are not eaten, under running tap water before packing them.

The Two-Hour Rule

Perishable foods should not sit at room temperature for more than two hours. Keep track of how long foods have been sitting out on the table and immediately refrigerate or discard anything that was left out for more than two hours.

Keep Hot Foods Hot and Cold Foods Cold

Foods that have been cooked to the proper temperatures should be held at 135°F or warmer by using the oven, chaffing dishes, slow cookers or warming trays.

Cold foods should be held at 41°F or below. Keep foods cold by nesting dishes in bowls of ice; otherwise, use small serving trays and replace them every two hours.

Leftovers

After the meal, it is always important to put away all leftovers promptly, remembering the two-hour rule.

All meats should be cut off the bone and placed in shallow containers (less than 2" deep).

All other foods should also be placed in shallow containers and refrigerated or frozen promptly. Do not forget to refrigerate the noodles and rice, too!

Use your leftover meats, turkey, stuffing and other perishable cooked foods within three to four days. If you are not going to use these foods in this time frame, consider dividing them up and freezing them for later use. Always reheat all foods rapidly to 165°F prior to eating.