

Have a Foodborne Illness- Free Summer!

Summer is the season for bar-b-ques, picnics, family reunions, pool parties, and other outdoor get-togethers. Before you fire-up your grill or prepare your favorite pot-luck recipe, keep in mind that you and your loved ones aren't the only ones who enjoy the summer gatherings. Harmful microorganisms such as *Salmonella*, *E. coli*, and toxin-producing *Staphylococcus aureus* thrive when food is left out or not heated to proper temperatures, when cross-contamination occurs, or when short-cuts in cleaning and preparation are taken. Protect your family, friends, and yourself from foodborne illnesses by following these simple tips.



Wash Your Hands

Always wash your hands with hot, soapy water before and after handling food. If you won't have access to a sink, plan ahead by bringing soap, water, and paper towels. Or, consider using moist disposable towelettes.

Marinating Mandate

When marinating for long periods of time, it is important to keep foods refrigerated. Don't marinate foods on the counter or outdoors. Don't use sauce that was used to marinate raw meat or poultry on cooked food. Do not reuse marinade.

Hot, Hot, Hot

When grilling foods, preheat the coals on your grill for 20 to 30 minutes, or until the coals are lightly coated with ash.

Temperature Gauge

Use a meat thermometer to insure that food reaches a safe internal temperature. Hamburgers should be cooked to 160° F, while large cuts of beef such as roasts and steaks may be cooked to 145° F for medium rare or to 160° F for medium. Cook ground poultry to 165° F and poultry parts to 170° F. Fish should be opaque and flake easily.

Keep cold foods cold

Place cold food in a cooler with plenty of ice or freezer packs. A full cooler will maintain its cold temperatures longer than one that is partially filled, so make sure to pack enough. Also, be sure to keep your refrigerator at 40° F or below.

Stay Away from that Same Old Plate

When taking foods off the grill, do not put cooked food items back on the same plate that previously held raw food. Also, wash all utensils that came in contact with raw meats before using them to handle cooked foods to prevent cross-contamination.

Icebox Etiquette

Ice can also be contaminated with bacteria. Do not use bare hands to serve ice. Use a scoop or cup instead.

For more information, visit

CDC Food Safety Office: www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/grill.htm

FDA Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition: www.cfsan.fda.gov