



Food and Picnic Safety

How to prevent foodborne illnesses

What is the Problem?

Warmer weather conditions are ideal for outdoor picnics and barbecues, but they also provide a perfect environment for bacteria and other pathogens in food to multiply rapidly and cause foodborne illness.¹ Therefore, it is vitally important to take extra precautions and practice safe food handling when preparing perishable food items (e.g. meat, poultry, seafood, egg products and those that contain dairy).²



Facts

- Every year, approximately 48 million people get sick, 128,000 are hospitalized, and 3,000 die from foodborne diseases.³
- Foodborne illnesses are caused by bacteria; unwashed hands, contaminated surfaces, perishable food items left out in warm temperatures, and food not cooked to the proper temperature.⁴
- Symptoms of food poisoning include upset stomach, abdominal cramps, nausea and vomiting, diarrhea, fever, and dehydration.⁵
- Some types of foodborne disease can cause kidney failure, chronic arthritis, and/or brain and nerve damage.⁶
- Foodborne illness costs Americans billions of dollars each year.⁷

Prevention Tips

- **Wash your hands.** Always wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food.⁸
- **Marinate your food in the refrigerator.** Do not use sauce that was used to marinate raw meat or poultry on cooked food.⁹
- **Use a thermometer.** This will ensure that you cook meat and poultry thoroughly. Ground beef should be cooked to an internal temperature of 160 degrees Fahrenheit. Poultry should be cooked to 165 degrees Fahrenheit.¹⁰
- **Cook at the right temperature.** Preheat the coals for your grill for approximately 20-30 minutes.¹¹
- **Always use a clean plate.** Avoid cross-contamination by never putting cooked meat back on a plate that held raw meat.¹²
- **Hot vs. Cold.** Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.¹³
- **Refrigerate leftovers.** When the meal is finished put any leftovers in the fridge immediately.¹⁴



Plan of the Week (POW):¹⁵

As you're preparing for summer BBQs, it is important in warmer weather to take extra precautions and practice safe food handling when preparing perishable foods such as meat, poultry, seafood and egg products. **ALWAYS** wash your hands, use a clean plate, and keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. **NEVER** use the sauce that was used to marinate raw meat or poultry on cooked food.

References

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<http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/health-promotion/injury-violence-free-living/Pages/injury-violence-free-living.aspx>

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