



# Good for You!

## Be Safe at the Plate – and the Park!

As the weather warms up, our outdoor activities increase, and so does our chance for foodborne illness. Safe food handling is important ALL times of the year, but warmer temperatures and active lifestyles make spring and summer prime times to think – and ACT – to keep you and your family food safe.

### Clean, Separate, Cook and Chill – Keep Your Cookout Safe from Bacteria!

**Clean** – No matter what the season, it's important to keep your kitchen and eating area clean. When the “kitchen” is a grill in the park, and the “eating area” is a picnic table or a blanket on



the ground, keeping clean can be a challenge. Think to bring paper towels, wipes or cloths to clean surfaces you will use, and consider packing a tablecloth or place mats to keep your food and utensils clean.

**Separate** – Be sure to keep raw food away from cooked or ready-to-eat foods. Use plastic zipper-type bags to keep fresh veggies clean in the ice chest, completely separated from the potato salad in its sealed bowl and the hamburger patties

chilling in their own closed bag or container. Always use a fresh, clean plate and tongs for serving cooked food – never re-use items that touched raw meat or poultry. Use separate cutting boards and utensils for raw meat and ready-to-eat foods like veggies or bread.

**Cook** – Keep cold food cold until it goes on the grill – then cook it until it is safe. Use a food thermometer to make sure meat and poultry are cooked thoroughly – and to prevent overcooking! Cook ground meat to 160° F, and any type of poultry is safe at 165° F. Steaks, roasts and chops are safely cooked when they reach 145° F. with a 3-minute rest time.

**Chill** – Keep that picnic on the clock! Perishable food should not sit out for more than two hours, and in hot weather (above 90° F) food should NEVER sit out for more than one hour – that's one hour from when it comes off the grill to when it is eaten or refrigerated. Consider serving cold food like salad or cut fruit in small portions, keeping the rest in the cooler.



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# More Warm Weather Food Safety Tips

- ✱ Use an insulated cooler filled with ice or frozen gel packs to keep your picnic safe. Foods that need to be kept cold include raw meat, poultry and seafood; deli and luncheon meats or sandwiches, summer salads such as chicken or tuna salad; cut up fruit and vegetables, and perishable dairy products.
- ✱ Keep sack lunches and snacks safe by adding a frozen juice box or small ice pack to an insulated lunch box.
- ✱ Going out to eat? Consider planning ahead and bringing an insulated bag with an ice pack to safely carry home your leftovers.
- ✱ Summer grocery shopping can be challenging when temperatures are high. Pack your cold or frozen items together in an insulated bag for the ride home (be sure to separate raw meat from other foods!) You may want to use a cooler if your drive is more than one hour.

## It Starts With You!

The number one thing we can do to protect ourselves against illness, including foodborne illness, is in each of our hands.

That's right – handwashing!

Remember to wash hands before and after preparing food, before eating, after using the toilet, changing a diaper or petting the puppy – the list goes on, and the healthy

habit of handwashing is important to start early and continue through life. Help little ones learn to wash their hands correctly – for about 20 seconds with soap and water – and to recognize how clean hands keep them healthy. Teens, adults and seniors all play a role in keeping themselves and their families safe by washing hands often.



For more information:



*Food safety tips for preschoolers*

<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/ten-tips-food-safety-tips-preschoolers>

*Food safety tips for summer and vacations*

<https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/events/summervacations/>



*Food safety for seniors*

<https://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodborneIllnessContaminants/PeopleAtRisk/ucm182679.htm#illness>

**Be safe out there!**



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This material is funded by USDA SNAP. USDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider. SNAP provides food assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. For information, call 1-888-369-4777.

**For more information, contact your local Extension Office**