



*Center for
Health & Hygiene
in the Home & Community*

The Center for Health and Hygiene in the Home and Community serves as a national and international resource for information and education, applied research, professional training and conferences. The Center focuses on issues relating to hygiene and infection control in areas such as:

- consumer food safety
- home hygiene
- daycare
- preschool
- homecare
- sports and leisure activity
- travel and hospitality

Simmons College
300 The Fenway
Boston, MA 02115
www.simmons.edu/hygieneandhealth

*Center for
Health & Hygiene
in the Home & Community*

Food Handling Tips
for Safe Summer
Barbeques and Picnics



July 2007

Temperature Taking Tips

Golden rule: Cook food thoroughly to make it safe

It is important to cook meats to hot enough temperatures to kill any bacteria or pathogens present and decrease the risk of food borne illness. Bacteria such as E-coli and salmonella can still be present in undercooked meats such as hamburger and chicken. These can cause severe illness and even death.

To properly check the internal temperature of the meat, insert the thermometer into the center of the meat, which is the least cooked part. Do not to pass through the meat and touch the cooking or you will get a false high temperature

SAFE MINIMUM INTERNAL TEMPERATURES

- Whole poultry, Poultry breasts, ground poultry: 165 °F
- Hamburgers, beef, veal, pork and lamb (steaks, roasts and chops): 160 °F

reading. Some guides give a confusing number of different temperatures but there is only one temperature to remember—160°F. This is the lowest temperature that reliably kills food poisoning germs and destroys heat sensitive toxins.

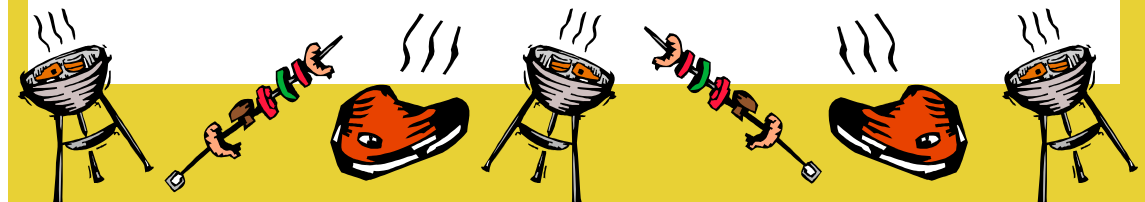
Resources

[How to Prevent Food Poisoning. A Practical Guide to Safe Cooking, Eating and Food Handling.](#) 1998. Elizabeth Scott, PhD, & Paul Sockett, PhD. Published by John Wiley & Sons.

[United States Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service \(FSIS\)](#)
http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Barbecue_Food_Safety/index.asp
FSIS Meat and Poultry Toll free Hotline: 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854);
1-800-256-7072 (TDD/TTY)

[Food Services of America](#)
www.fsafood.com

[U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition](#)
<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/fssummer.html>



Cooking outdoors has become a year round practice in America and barbecuing is even more popular during the summer time. But the warm summer temperatures are ideal for bacteria and other pathogens & allow them to multiply and cause foodborne illness. There are three important areas to consider regarding food safety when planning a BBQ or just grilling in the back yard.

- Personal hygiene
- Transportation and storage of food
- Food Preparation

Follow these simple guidelines for safely barbecuing your food.

Personal Hygiene

Golden Rule: Wash or sanitize your hands frequently

Always wash your hands before handling raw foods. Use warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds. For more information see our Food Safety Myths informational handout online at: <http://www.simmons.edu/hygieneandhealth/tips/>.



If planning a BBQ away from home, pack paper towels, and an antimicrobial kitchen sanitizer, moist towelettes and hand sanitizer for cleaning surfaces and hands. It's best if you can choose a cooking spot with hand washing facilities near by. However, if you cannot access a sink, a bucket with clean hot water and soap will do.

Never prepare food if you are suffering from an infectious enteric disease, such as salmonellosis, and hepatitis, or if you have experienced diarrhea or vomiting in the past 48 hours. Always make sure that any wounds on your hands are protected by a waterproof covering.

Wear protective clothing such as aprons and oven mitts when working around the grill.

Tie long hair back in a pony tail or bun or wear a hat or bandana to keep hair from falling into the food or into your face.

Transportation & Storage

Golden Rule: Keep food cool.



Avoid long delays when traveling to picnic areas, instead travel straight to the venue. Keep all food covered and perishable food chilled.

When transporting food to the barbecue site, keep it cold to minimize bacterial growth.

If you pick up foods at the supermarket deli or from a restaurant, eat these foods within two hours of purchasing them. Otherwise use an insulated cooler with sufficient ice or ice packs to keep the food chilled at 40°F. While traveling in the car it is best to keep the cooler in the air conditioned passenger compartment and place it in the shade at the picnic site.

Avoid opening the cooler's lid, which lets cold air out and warm air in. When you do open the cooler only remove the amount of food that you will place immediately on the grill.

Keep flies and other insects away from the food

storage, grilling, and serving areas. Cover trash containers, and do not store meat wrappers and other trash, in open cardboard boxes or uncovered containers.

Food Preparation

Golden Rule: Prevent cross-contamination

The BBQ and immediate environment should be kept clean and tidy at all times. Wipe down all surfaces with a kitchen sanitizer.



Foods that reach the temperature listed (see the Safe Minimum Internal Temperature chart) or higher are fully cooked.

Be sure to have plenty of clean utensils and containers/platters for separately handling the raw foods and the food after cooking.

Don't use the same platter and utensils for raw and cooked meat and poultry. Any bacteria present in raw meat or juices can contaminate the safely cooked meat. Cross contamination is a main cause of summer foodborne illness. Cross contamination is the transfer of bacteria from raw meat to other foods via hands, chopping boards, utensils, containers etc, and commonly causes food poisoning. Be cautious of cross contamination from raw meat to cooked and ready-to-eat food. Keep raw meat well separated in different containers and wash hands (or use a hand sanitizer) and utensils immediately after coming into contact with raw meat. Never put cooked food on a plate that has been used for raw meat and do not place the cooked meat back in the marinade used for the raw meat.

Completely thaw meat and poultry before grilling so it cooks more evenly. Use the refrigerator for

slow, safe thawing; microwave on defrost if the food will be placed immediately on the grill; or thaw sealed packages in cold water.

Before your start cooking, light the barbecue well in advance and make sure it's very hot before you begin to put food on the grill.

Use an instant-read meat thermometer to ensure that the meat has been properly cooked. While the juice color will usually change from red to clear or gray when the meat is fully cooked, it is not wise to assume it is safe to eat. Always check the temperature with the thermometer. Oftentimes meat and chicken becomes charred on the outside and appears fully cooked but is still undercooked inside, to remedy this avoid cooking food too close to the heat source.

If using pre-cooked meats be sure to heat food thoroughly so it is piping hot all the way through and serve it hot.

Marinating: Many recipes call for marinating meat and poultry for several hours or days before cooking, either to tenderize or add flavor. Always marinate food in the refrigerator, not on the counter.



Do not re-use marinade used on raw meat or poultry unless it is boiled first to destroy any

Pre-Cooking: You can shorten the grilling time for your food by partially cooking it in the microwave or oven. Pre-cook foods immediately before grilling to destroy bacteria.