

Summer Food Safety: Tips to Prevent Foodborne Illness



Wash hands and clean surfaces frequently: Wash hands for at least 20 seconds after using the bathroom, and before cooking and eating. Consider carrying disposable towelettes to clean hands and surfaces when eating in outdoor settings.

Keep raw food separate from cooked food: When transporting food into outdoor settings, be sure to separate raw meats and secure them so their juices do not come into contact with ready-to-eat food.

Cook food thoroughly: When cooking outdoors, bring a food thermometer to ensure that all food is safely cooked to a high enough temperature. Beef, pork, lamb, and veal steaks, chops, and roasts need to be cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 145 degrees Fahrenheit. Ground beef, pork, lamb and veal need to be cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 160 degrees Fahrenheit. All poultry needs to reach a minimum internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit.

Refrigerate and freeze food promptly: In general, food should never be left out of the cooler or off the grill for more than two hours. If the temperature is above 90 degrees Fahrenheit, do not leave food out for more than one hour.

Keep hot food hot, and cold foods cold: Hot food should be kept at or above 140 degrees Fahrenheit and placed in an insulated container. Cold food should be held at or below 40 degrees Fahrenheit. Cold foods should be placed directly on ice, or in a container filled with ice.

Leftovers: The best way to avoid food from spoiling is to put it away immediately after a meal. Do not save food that has been left out for more than 2 hours. *When in doubt, throw it out!*