



Six Super Steps for Safe Food in the Summertime

During the summer months, it is especially important to take extra precautions and practice safe food handling when preparing perishable foods such as meat, poultry, seafood, and egg products. The warm weather is perfect for outdoor picnics and barbecues, however it also creates an ideal environment for bacteria in our foods to grow rapidly and cause foodborne illness. Follow the suggestions below to Fight Bac® (foodborne bacteria) and reduce the risk of foodborne illness this summer.

1. **Wash, Wash, Wash your Hands** (as in Row, Row, Row your Boat) Always wash your hands before and after handling food (especially raw meats, poultry, or seafood).
2. **Marinate Mandate** When marinating for long periods of time, it is important to keep foods refrigerated. Don't re-use sauce that was used to marinate raw meat or poultry on cooked foods. Boil used marinade before applying to cooked foods.
3. **Hot, Hot, Hot** When grilling foods, preheat the coals on your grill for 20 – 30 minutes, or until the coals are lightly coated with ash.
4. **Temperature Gauge** Use a meat thermometer to ensure that food reaches a safe internal temperature.
Hamburgers cook to 160°; Roasts/Steaks cook to 145°
Ground Poultry cook to 165°; Poultry parts cook to 170°
Fish should be opaque and flake easily
5. **Stay Away From That Same Old Plate** When taking food off the grill, do not put cooked foods back on the same plate that held raw foods.
6. **Icebox Etiquette** A full cooler with keep its temperature longer, pack extra ice or cold packs to keep your cold foods really cold.

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Adapted from: <http://portal.fightbac.org/pfse/toolsyoucanuse/seasonal/picnicscookouts/>