

# BARBECUE SAFETY

## Are you ready?

When grilling, foods can be very susceptible to bacteria and other harmful pathogens.

A key factor in keeping your food safe when grilling is proper preparation. Use the following guidelines to help you prepare for safe grilling!

### Get Ready!

#### Safety starts in the cart!

When shopping, put meat and poultry products in the shopping cart last, right before checkout. To guard against cross-contamination - which can happen when raw meat or poultry juices drip on other foods - put packages of raw meat and poultry into plastic grocery bags.

When transporting meat products, put them in the air-conditioned part of the car, not in the trunk! If the trip to the grocery store is more than 30 minutes, bring an ice-filled cooler to transport perishables.

At home, place meat and poultry in the refrigerator immediately. Freeze poultry and ground meat that won't be used in 1 or 2 days; freeze other meat within 4 to 5 days.

#### Defrost Safely.

Completely thaw meat and poultry before grilling so it cooks more evenly. Use the refrigerator for slow, safe thawing; microwave defrost if food will be grilled immediately; or thaw sealed packages in cold water. Never thaw meat on the counter at room temperature.

### Get Set!

#### Gather the right utensils.

Grilling often requires using many different utensils and dishes. Be sure you have all the following utensils before firing up the grill.

- Thermometer;
- Ice-filled cooler;
- Clean-soapy sponges and towelettes to clean surfaces, utensils and hands;
- Clean dishes for preparing food;
- Clean dishes for serving food;
- Warming tray.

#### Keep everything clean.

Be sure there are plenty of clean utensils and platters to keep raw and cooked foods separated.

Always wash your hands before handling food and utensils. Don't use the same utensils for raw and cooked meat and poultry. Be sure to wash your hands after handling meat as well. Any bacteria present in raw meat or juices can contaminate the safely cooked meat. This a prime cause of summer foodborne illness.



### Go!



#### Transport food safely.

When carrying food to a picnic site, keep it cool to minimize bacterial growth. If take-out foods such as fried chicken or barbecued beef will be reheated on the grill, and they won't be eaten within two hours of pickup, buy them ahead of time and chill thoroughly.

Use an insulated cooler with sufficient ice or ice packs to keep the food at 40 degrees F. Then pack the food right from the refrigerator into the cooler immediately before leaving.

Transport the cooler in the air-conditioned part of the car.

#### Keep cold food cold.

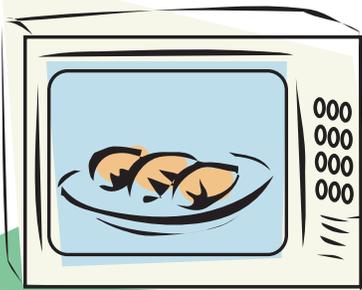
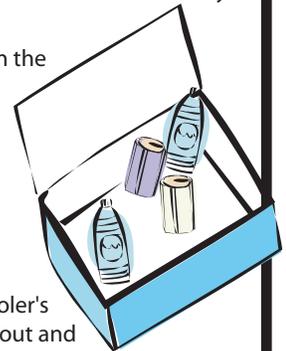
Avoid opening the cooler's lid, which lets cold air out and warm air in. Pack beverages in one cooler and perishables in another cooler.

When handling raw meat, remove from the cooler only the amount that will fit on the grill.

#### Precook right before grilling.

Some people like to cook food partially in the microwave, oven or stove to reduce grilling time.

Precook immediately before grilling to destroy bacteria. If you have to transport food after precooking, be sure to keep it in a dish or kettle that keeps the food very hot.



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## fire up the grill!

Now that you have gotten everything prepared you should be ready to fire up the grill. However, there are still several food safety precautions to remember while cooking, serving and storing left-over food.

### Cook!

#### Marinating.

Some recipes state to marinate meat and poultry for several hours or days, either to tenderize or add flavor. Always marinate food in the refrigerator, not at room temperature.

If some of the marinade is to be used as a sauce on the cooked food, reserve a portion of the marinade. Don't put raw meat and poultry in it.

#### Cook Thoroughly

Meat and poultry cooked on a grill often brown very fast on the outside. Use a meat thermometer to be sure the food has reached a safe internal temperature.

The following foods will be safely done at the following temperatures:

- Whole poultry — 180° F
- Poultry breasts — 170° F
- Hamburgers — 160° F
- Beef, veal and lamb steaks, roasts and chops — 145° F
- All cuts of pork — 160° F

Never partially grill meat or poultry and finish cooking later. Cook food completely to destroy harmful bacteria. When reheating take-out foods or fully-cooked meats like hot dogs, grill to 165° F.

### Serve!

#### Keep hot foods hot!

After cooking meat and poultry on the grill - at home or on a picnic - keep it hot until served. Keep the cooked meats hot by setting them to the side of the grill rack, not directly over the coals where they would eventually overcook.

At home, the cooked meat can be kept hot in a 200o F oven, in a chafing dish or slow cooker, or on a warming tray. After cooking, hold hot food at 140° F or warmer.

#### Serving the Food.

When taking food off the grill, don't put the cooked items on the same platter that held the raw meat. Any bacteria present in the raw meat juices could contaminate the safely cooked meat or other grilled foods.

In hot weather (90° +) food should never sit out for more than one hour. If it does, discard it immediately.

#### Did you know...

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Dairy and Food Inspection Division and its delegates routinely inspect Minnesota grocery stores to be sure the food you buy is safe.

#### Did you know...

The temperature of refrigerated foods rises approximately eight to 10 degrees on a typical trip home from the grocery store in the summer!

### Store!



#### Handling leftovers.

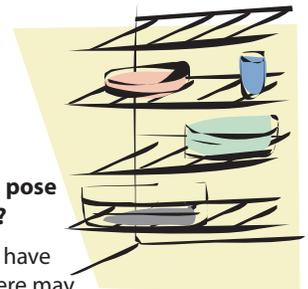
Before handling leftovers, be sure to wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.

Before placing food in cold storage, wrap or cover it sufficiently. Keep all different types of meat products separated.

At home, store leftovers in the refrigerator or freezer within two hours of taking food off the grill. Leftovers that have been off the grill for less than one hour can be safely transported home from a picnic in an ice-filled cooler.

Place raw meat and poultry products at the bottom of the fridge or cooler to avoid cross-contamination.

Discard any food left out more than two hours (one hour in hot weather).



#### Does grilling pose a cancer risk?

Some studies have suggested there may be a cancer risk related to eating food cooked by such high heat cooking techniques as grilling, frying and broiling. Based on present research, eating moderate amounts of grilled meats like fish, meat and poultry cooked without charring to a safe, yet medium temperature does not pose a problem. To avoid charring, microwave meat partly done immediately before placing it on the grill, and remove visible fat that can drip on the coals and cause a flame-up.

Grilling safety information courtesy of United States Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service.

For more tips on food safety call the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Food Safety Information Line at 651-296-1592 or visit the Department's website at [www.mda.state.mn.us](http://www.mda.state.mn.us).

In accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, an alternative form of communication is available upon request. TTY 1-800-627-3529