

Summer BBQ Food Safety Tips

Nothing is more fun than a summer BBQ... but did you know that this is a time when rates of food borne illnesses soar? Yes, it is time to talk about food safety so that all of your parties can go off without a hitch!

Before You Begin:

- Wash your hands: this is THE most important step in preventing food borne illness. Use warm water and soap.
- Wipe down all surfaces (before, during and after food preparation)
- Marinate food in the refrigerator, not the countertop: don't taste the marinade or re-use it after raw meat has been added. (Reserve a small quantity if you need additional marinade)
- Use separate cutting boards for raw meats and produce
- WASH your produce. Water is not enough (remember if you are buying conventional produce the pesticides are formulated to withstand rain and therefore water is doing absolutely nothing. You can wash produce with a mixture of white vinegar and water. Scrub produce that is "scrubbable", and make sure to wash melons and citrus too (whatever is on the outside gets in when you cut through it).

Safe Grilling Tips:

- Cook foods thoroughly: many recipes say "when juices run clear" but this is not an accurate method to determine when meat is cooked. Invest in a meat thermometer.

Beef, veal & lamb steaks/roasts	145°F med rare, 160°F med, 170°F well
Ground pork or beef	160°F
Ground Poultry	165°F
Whole Poultry	180°F (taken in thigh)
Chicken breast	170°F
Fin Fish	145°F or until flesh is flaky and separates easily with a fork
Shrimp, lobster, and crabs	The meat should be pearly and opaque
Clams, oysters and mussels	Until the shells are open

- Keep children away from the BBQ at all times. Let them help prepare other items on the menu so that they are still involved in the cooking process.

When You Serve Food:

- Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold! Serve foods like potato salad or dips on ice beds if they will sit out for a while. BBQ'ed items can be left on the grill after it is turned off to stay hot until it is time to be served.
- Do not let perishable foods sit out longer than 2 hours in moderate temperatures. If it is 90°F or more, food should not sit out for more than an hour.

Have a safe and fun BBQ... what time should I be there?