



# Summer Time Food Safety Basics

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**Summer time is a great time for getting together with family and friends – often at a park or for a picnic. Follow these basic food safety steps for safe, and healthy, summer time fun.**

During warm weather, 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 warmer weather conditions may be ideal for outdoor picnics and barbecues, but they also provide a perfect environment for bacteria and other pathogens in food to multiply rapidly and cause foodborne illness. Follow the steps below to Fight BAC!® (foodborne bacteria) and reduce the risk of foodborne illness this summer.

**Clean: Wash, Wash, Wash Your Hands** (as in Row, Row, Row Your Boat). Always, wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food. Soap and water is best, but pack some instant hand sanitizer in your picnic basket for those times when soap and water are not available.

**Cook: Cook Foods to Proper Temperatures.** Use a food thermometer to ensure that food reaches a safe internal temperature. Once cooked, keep hot foods hot, at 145°F or above.

**Chill: Keep Cold Foods Cold.** Thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator, never on the counter. Harmful bacteria can begin to grow in raw meats, poultry, fish and eggs if left at room temperature. Avoid the **Danger Zone** – temperatures between 40°F and 140°F – by keeping cold foods on ice or in the refrigerator, and keeping hot foods above 140°F. Limit time in the Danger Zone to 1 hour when the temperature is above 90°F; to 2 hours when the temperature is below 90°F.

**Separate: Stay Away from that Same Old Plate.** When taking foods off the grill, do not put cooked food items back on the same plate that held raw food, unless it has been washed with hot, soapy water first. Wash cutting boards too with warm soapy water to prevent the transfer of germs from one food to another. Sanitize cleaned cutting boards and other surfaces with a dilute bleach solution - 1 teaspoon of bleach per quart of water – and allow to air dry.

## Safe Internal Temperatures

Hamburgers – 160° F

Steaks or roasts – 145° (medium rare)  
or 160° F (medium)

Pork – 160° F

Chicken – 165° F

Fish – 160° F or until the flesh flakes  
easily with a fork