

Food safety guidelines for summertime picnics

Summer heat promotes the growth of bacteria that can cause food-borne illnesses. That's why it's important to take extra precautions when preparing and serving food outdoors, away from the convenience of refrigeration and hot running water.

Public Health encourages you to consider the following safety tips when dining outdoors:

Effective hand washing can reduce the spread of bacteria

- Use hot soapy water before and after you handle food.
- If soap and water aren't available, use an alcohol-based sanitizer.
- Cleanse hands between food preparation tasks (example: after handling raw meat and before mixing potato salad).

Extra precautions are needed when eating outdoors

- Warm weather makes bacteria grow faster.
- If possible, do most food prep at home where soap and water are available.
- Use separate utensils, cutting boards and bowls for raw meat.
- Wash fruits and vegetables in running water.

Cook your meats thoroughly

- Barbequed meats may look done on the outside, even when the insides aren't done.
- Chicken – cook to 165 degrees Fahrenheit (or until it has no pink inside).
- Ground beef and pork – cook to 160 degrees Fahrenheit. Beef roasts or steaks – cook to 145 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Fish – cook to 145 degrees Fahrenheit (or until it is opaque and flakes easily).

