

BBQ Facts

Barbequing at home or away from home provides a unique flavour to our food. As this type of cooking takes place outside of our kitchens, additional safety precautions need to be taken when handling, preparing and serving some of our favourite foods to ensure we prevent foodborne illness. There are 4 steps to food safety which apply: Separate, Clean, Cook, Chill.

Separate:

- Keep raw and ready to eat ingredients separate to prevent cross-contamination
- When shopping for cuts of meat ensure you place these in the bottom of the cart to prevent drips onto other food in the cart
- Store raw meat cuts on a tray on the bottom of the refrigerator
- Use a separate plate and utensils for raw meat and prepared meat
- If transporting food in a cooler try to separate meat from other foods you may be taking
- Dispose of any marinades that raw meat has been in

Clean:

- Wash surfaces where you will be preparing food
- Wash your hands before handling food and between handling raw and prepared food (gloves are not a substitute for proper handwashing)
- Wash fruits and vegetables that will be part of your meal
- Wash and sanitize utensils between use on raw and ready to eat foods

Cook:

- Cook meat thoroughly from start to finish (partially cooked meat for reheating later is an unsafe practice)
- Remember thorough cooking kills bacteria
- Use a probe thermometer to check the doneness of the meat
- Different types of meat need to reach different temperatures to ensure they are safe: ground chicken and chicken pieces and meat mixtures need to reach 74°C (165°F), whole poultry 82°C (180°F) ground meats and pork 71°C (160°F) and fish and seafood 70°C (158°F)
- Beef, veal steaks and roasts can be cooked to your preferred doneness provided they have not been mechanically tenderized and the outside surface has been cooked

Chill:

- Store potentially hazardous foods such as meat, eggs and dairy products in the refrigerator at 4°C or lower until ready to use
- Cool leftovers quickly and store covered in the refrigerator or cooler at 4°C
- Freeze meat products and cook from frozen to reduce risk

REMEMBER: "If it's pink in the middle, put it back on the griddle."