



Central Michigan District Health Department

Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities



Jennifer Morse, MD, MPH, FAAFP
Medical Director

Steve Hall, RS, MS
Health Officer

PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

To: Local Media

From: Environmental Health Services Division, Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD)

Contact Name: Steve King, Director of Environmental Health

RE: Grilling Food Safety

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GRILLING FOOD SAFELY

Summertime is grilling season. Grilling outdoors can be an enjoyable experience and an added bonus to a social gathering. Freshly grilled hamburgers, chicken, and steaks add flavor and appeal to any meal. A few simple steps can ensure that the food you grill is not only delicious but also safe to eat. Here are a few precautions you should take when grilling out.

Clean- It is important to wash cutting boards, utensils and food prep areas with hot soapy water and rinse. This needs to be done before preparing food and anytime you switch the type of food. Clean the grill surface, even when using foil, to prevent foreign objects from getting into the food. Most important is to properly wash your hands. Run them under warm water, lather with soap for 20 seconds or long enough to sing happy birthday. Then rinse and towel dry (paper towels recommended).

Grill- When marinating, place the food in the refrigerator until you are ready to place on the grill. Do not reuse marinade that has been used on raw meats as this can have bacteria that will make someone sick. Make sure that you place food on a hot clean grill right away, especially if partially cooking meat inside first. It is important to check the food with a food thermometer to make sure the meat is cooked to a safe temperature. Poultry should be cooked to a minimum temperature of 165°F, red meats cooked to 155°F, and pork needs to reach a minimum temperature of 145°F. Once the meat is cooked, use clean utensils and a clean plate to serve. Never place meats back on a plate that was used for raw meats without being washed.

Serve- Hot foods need to be kept above 140°F and cold foods need to be kept at or below 40°F. Hot foods may be kept on a cooler portion of the grill until ready to serve. Cold foods can be placed in a cooler that is filled with ice for storage or place food in a shallow container directly on ice for service.

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Chill- Hot or cold foods should not sit out any longer than 2 hours at room temperature. Longer than two hours the food may not be safe to eat due to bacteria growth. If you are unsure the food has been out too long it is better to throw it out than to make someone sick. It is best to take care of food by placing it in the refrigerator or cooler as soon as possible. Keep food out of the bacteria danger zone that is between 40°F to 140°F.

Follow the few simple steps to clean, grill, serve, and chill to protect family, friends, and yourself while grilling outside this summer. To learn more about food safety visit www.foodsafety.gov and click the food safety link. You can also visit our website www.cmdhd.org under the BUSINESSES section.

This article has been brought to you by Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves the counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola, and Roscommon. Visit our website at www.cmdhd.org, LIKE Central Michigan District Health Department on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @CMiDHD.

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