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PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

To: Local Media Outlets
From: Central Michigan District Health Department
RE: CMDHD Sharing Food Safety Tips for Grilling Season
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Grilling Safely: CMDHD Shares Tips to Prevent Foodborne Illness

Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD) is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of our community members, including during summer cookouts. As we gear up for outdoor gatherings and delicious barbecues, it's essential to understand the importance of food safety in preventing foodborne illness.

"It's crucial to follow simple yet effective practices to keep your food safe," said Steve King, CMDHD Environmental Health Director. "When you prioritize safety, you can significantly reduce the risk of foodborne illnesses when you grill."

To help you enjoy your cookouts safely, CMDHD is sharing some simple yet important steps:

- **Hand Hygiene:** Before diving into meal preparation, take a moment to wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water. Proper handwashing is the first line of defense against harmful bacteria.
- **Separation Strategy:** Keep raw meats, such as chicken, beef, and seafood, separate from ready-to-eat foods like salads and fruits. This separation prevents cross-contamination and reduces the risk of spreading harmful pathogens.
- **Temperature Matters:** Invest in a reliable food thermometer to ensure that your grilled foods reach the appropriate internal temperatures. Whether it's burgers, chicken breasts, or steaks, make sure they're cooked to perfection: 145°F for whole cuts of beef, pork, veal, and lamb; 160°F for ground meats; and 165°F for poultry.
- **Thawing Safety:** When thawing frozen foods, do so safely in the refrigerator or in the microwave. Avoid thawing foods at room temperature to prevent bacterial growth.
- **Chill Out:** Keep perishable foods, such as potato salad, coleslaw, and dips, chilled until serving time. Promptly refrigerate leftovers to prevent bacterial growth.

Please visit us online at www.cmdhd.org.

- **Grill Maintenance:** Before firing up the grill, give it a thorough cleaning to remove any charred debris or grease buildup. After grilling, clean the grill again to prevent the accumulation of harmful bacteria.

By incorporating these practices into your summer grilling routine, you can savor delicious meals with peace of mind, knowing that you've taken the necessary steps to safeguard your health and that of your loved ones. For more food safety tips and resources, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/keep-food-safe.html>.

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 and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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