



Central Michigan District Health Department

Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities



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PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

To: Local Media

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

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RE: Grilling Food Safety

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Keep Food Safe This Summer

Food poisoning peaks in the summer months when warmer temperatures cause foodborne germs to flourish. Central Michigan District Health Department wants to remind the public that it is important to follow a few simple food safety steps to prevent harmful bacteria from multiplying and spoiling your summer cookout.

Clean- It is important to wash your hands properly. Wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds before, during, and after handling food. Wash and clean cutting boards, utensils, dishes, and food preparation areas before and after cooking. Use a clean serving dish for the cooked food when taking off the grill. Don't forget to clean the grill to prevent foreign objects from getting into the food.

Separate- When shopping, pick up meat, poultry, and seafood last, right before checkout. Separate them from other food in your shopping cart and grocery bags. To guard against cross-contamination, put packages of raw meat, poultry, and seafood into individual plastic bags.

Thaw- Never thaw foods on the counter. Harmful germs can multiply very quickly at room temperature. The safest way to thaw meat, poultry, and seafood is in the refrigerator.

Chill- Keep food out of the bacteria danger zone that is between 40°F to 140°F. Foods in the danger zone for longer than two hours may not be safe to eat due to bacteria growth. Keep meat, poultry, and seafood refrigerated until ready to grill. Divide leftovers into small portions and place in covered, shallow containers. Put in freezer or refrigerator within 2 hours of cooking.

Grill- Place food on a hot clean grill right away, especially if partially cooking meat inside first. Use a food thermometer to ensure meat is cooked hot enough to kill harmful germs. Poultry should be cooked to a

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minimum temperature of 165°F, ground meats cooked to 160°F, red meats cooked to 155°F, pork needs to reach a minimum temperature of 145°F, and fish cooked to 145°F. Prepare a fresh marinade if basting meat to prevent transferring bacteria from the marinade used on the raw meat.

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.

Follow the few simple steps to clean, chill, and serve 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 [SERVICES - Environmental Health 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 and LIKE Central Michigan District Health Department on Facebook.

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