

## FOOD SAFETY AND THE BARBECUE SEASON

Barbecuing is a great way to cook and get some fresh air at the same time. Here are some food safety tips to keep in mind when preparing your favourite grilling recipes.

### Reduce the risk of cross contamination:

- At the meat counter, put packages of meat, poultry and fish in the plastic bags that are sometimes available. This will help prevent contaminating other food in the grocery cart and will also help protect young children who may ride in the cart.
- At home, refrigerate raw meat, poultry and fish in leak proof pans to prevent contamination of other food.
- Wash your hands before and after handling raw meat, poultry and fish.
- Have one cutting board for raw meat, poultry and fish and a second one for ready-to-eat food.
- Tip: Have extra cutting boards on hand.
- Preparing food in a certain order can help prevent contamination. For example, prepare salad ingredients before preparing raw meat, poultry or fish.
- Mix ground meat with a spoon instead of your hands. When shaping burgers or meatballs, wear disposable plastic gloves. A small clean plastic bag on each hand also works. Discard the gloves or bags and wash your hands.
- Marinate raw meat, poultry and fish in the refrigerator. If you plan to use some of the marinade as a sauce, set aside a small amount before adding the raw meat.



### Cook food to safe internal temperatures

- Tip: Have clean plates and extra tongs, basting brushes and hamburger flippers handy before you start cooking.
- Cook food to safe temperatures to kill harmful bacteria such as [E. coli](#) and [Salmonella](#) and [Campylobacter](#). The colour of cooked meat, poultry, and fish or their juices is no longer a reliable way to tell when food is safely cooked.
- Check temperatures with a meat thermometer or a [digital instant read thermometer](#). For example, burgers are done at 71°C (160°F). See the chart below.

- Insert the thermometer into the thickest part of the food. The probe should not touch fat, bone or gristle.
- Wash the thermometer probe in hot soapy water after checking a temperature.

**Is it DONE?** 

Check internal temperatures with a thermometer

<b>74°C</b>	Poultry, casseroles, leftovers	<b>165°F</b>
<b>71°C</b>	Ground meats (beef, veal, lamb); pork; egg dishes	<b>160°F</b>
<b>63°C</b>	Beef, lamb, veal, steak, roast, seafood	<b>145°F</b>
<b>60°C</b>	Holding cooked foods	<b>140°F</b>

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- Serve food hot off the grill, on clean plates.
- Refrigerate or freeze leftovers within 2 hours after a meal.

### Clean up carefully

- Wash utensils, dishes, cutting boards, countertops and sinks with hot soapy water. For extra safety after washing, sanitize with a mild bleach solution. Tip: To make a mild bleach solution, add 1/4 tsp [1 ml] of bleach to 1/2 litre (2 cups) of water.
- Many kitchen utensils, including plastic cutting boards, can go in the dishwasher.
- Put dishcloths, hand towels and tea towels in the laundry.

For more food safety information, call the Environmental Health Program, Alberta Health Services at 403-943-2288 or click on the [Environmental Health website:](http://www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/publichealth/envhealth/)

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