

Tips for your Summer Barbecue

Celebrate the warmer weather and summer holidays with a safe and healthy backyard barbecue. Listed below are some tips.

Focus on Food Safety

It's important to follow these food safety guidelines to prevent foodborne illness:

- **Thaw food completely and safely** overnight in the refrigerator, or in the microwave immediately before grilling
- **Marinate food in the refrigerator** and discard the leftover marinade
- **Separate raw and cooked food.** Don't use the same plates and utensils for raw and cooked meat, poultry, and fish
- **Cook food thoroughly.** Achieve a safe minimum internal temperature to destroy harmful bacteria:
 - Steaks, chops, and roasts – 145°F
 - Hamburgers – 160°F
 - Poultry – 165°F
- **Keep cold food cold** (below 40°F)
- **Keep hot food hot** (above 140°F)
- **Discard food left out more than 2 hours** (or 1 hour if outside temperatures are above 90°F).

Choose Healthier Options

You can enjoy the flavors of summer while still following a healthy eating pattern with these basic tips:

- **Start building your menu around fruits and vegetables.** They are low in calories, high in fiber, and full of nutrients. Try grilling pineapple, peach halves, zucchini, bell peppers, onions, or portabella mushrooms. Vegetable skewers are a fun way to add a variety of vegetables to a meal and make for a great presentation.
- **Add lean protein options** that are low in saturated fats. Try grilling poultry or fish instead of hot dogs and hamburgers. Turkey burgers, chicken, shrimp, salmon, and tilapia filets are great options.
- **Choose smarter sides.** When making a green, pasta, or potato salad, try replacing the mayonnaise with an oil- or yogurt-based dressing. Fruit salad is naturally sweet and makes a great alternative to desserts full of added sugars.

Contributed by Christine Samoriski, Dietetic Intern 2016-2017