

Dietitian Tip July
Tuesday 14/20

Food Safety In The Summer Months

FOOD SAFETY IN THE SUMMER MONTHS

Summer is a great time to be outside and enjoy food with friends and family, but preparing and eating food outdoors requires extra attention to food safety. Here are some tips to keep food safe at your next barbeque or picnic:

1. Practice hand hygiene – wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
2. Keep food out of the danger zone (between 4°C and 60°C) – the danger zone is the temperature zone where food can grow bacteria quickly and make us sick. Do not keep potentially hazardous foods in the danger zone for more than 2 hours, or 1 hour if outdoor temperatures are above 30°C. Potentially hazardous foods include meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy products, cooked vegetables, and cooked grains. Make sure that cold foods stay below 4°C and hot foods stay above 60°C.
3. Transport food safely – if you are packing food and drinks in coolers, make sure that raw meat, poultry and seafood is kept separate from other foods like fruits and vegetables. This helps prevent any leaking meat juices from contaminating foods that will be eaten raw. Use ice packs to keep coolers cold (below 4°C).
4. Pack drinks and perishable food in separate coolers – drink coolers are opened and closed frequently, which can allow warm air to enter the cooler. Warm air can raise the temperature of the cooler, so it's best to keep perishable food in a cooler that stays closed as much as possible!
5. Prevent cross-contamination when grilling – don't reuse plates or utensils that previously held raw meat, poultry or seafood when serving cooked food. Bacteria can transfer from the dirty plate or utensils onto cooked food and make us sick.

It is currently recommended to avoid sharing food between households or cohort groups. If you plan an outdoor gathering, encourage your guests to bring their own food, drink and utensils to minimize the risk of transmitting COVID-19.

References:

<https://www.alberta.ca/restrictions-on-gatherings.aspx>

<https://www.fda.gov/food/buy-store-serve-safe-food/handling-food-safely-while-eating-outdoors>

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/wf/eph/wf-eh-alberta-food-safety-basics-booklet.pdf#:~:text=The%20Food%20Regulation%20requires%20that%20a%20food%20establishment,to%20the%200requirement%20for%20a%20food%20handling%20permit.>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/seasonal-food-safety/summer-food-safety-tips.html>

Find example recipes, and more information on nutrition and healthy eating, at www.grandeprairiepcn.com/resources/dietitiantip