

# Journey to the Barbecue - Safe Grilling Tips from Stop Foodborne Illness

*Warmer temperatures outside comes an increased risk of foodborne illness. Learn these food safety grilling tips.*

CHICAGO, IL, UNITED STATES, April 30, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As weather gets warmer and days get longer, we inevitably want to gather with friends and family for evenings around the grill. However, with warmer temperatures also comes an increased risk of foodborne illness. According to [Stop Foodborne Illness](#) – a national, nonprofit, public health organization dedicated to preventing illness and death from foodborne pathogens – the bacteria in your food multiply faster at temperatures between 40°F and 140°F. Read on to learn how you can prevent foodborne illness while grilling so you can have fun, carefree and safe barbecues all summer long.

## Your Barbecue Journey

Knowing how to safely prepare, cook and store food is easier than you might think. Here are some tips on being food safe before, during, and after your barbecue.

### Destination #1 – The Grocery Store

Any great barbecue starts with quality meats and vegetables from your local grocery store. To avoid cross-contamination between the raw meats you purchase and other foods in your cart, wrap the meat in plastic produce bags (many grocery stores provide these).

This keeps the meat juices from dripping onto other items. For grocery stores that offer paper wrapping for poultry, fish, and red meat you may want to request extra wrapping from the employee assisting you. The main objective is to keep those raw meat juices away from produce and other items in your cart.

Remember, the trunk of your car is especially hot on warm days, so for the ride home, or on to wherever the cookout is happening, pack a cooler with ice (or frozen gel packs) to store the meat, especially for hot days over 90°F. If you're traveling a distance and packing produce and other items too, be sure to keep the uncooked meat in a separate cooler from the other items. If you're



Group enjoying grilling



Couple grocery shopping

headed home, meat and other perishables should be the first out of the car and into the fridge or freezer.

**Destination #2 – The Cookout Spot**  
You've arrived and you're ready to start cooking if you've done the following: Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water. Washing hands before and after handling raw meat help to avoid transferring any potential bacteria to other foods. If soap and water aren't easily accessible, bring a 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer to keep your hands clean throughout the process.

When preparing your meat, you want to prevent any bacteria from the raw meat (and juices) from contaminating your freshly barbecued meal. If marinating is your thing, make two batches of sauce – one for use on raw meat (marinating) and one for use on cooked meat (basting). After marinating raw meats in the fridge (not on the counter), discard the marinade. **DO NOT** reuse raw meat marinade for cooked food.

Most importantly, grill meat to a safe internal temperature. Using a meat thermometer is the only way to know if the meat is fully cooked, so don't guess! Check the temperature at the thickest part of the meat and sanitize the point of the thermometer in between readings.

#### Safe Internal Temperatures

- Burgers/ground meat (except poultry) to 160°F (72°C)
- Chicken and Poultry (including ground poultry like turkey burgers) to 165°F (74°C)
- Whole cuts of meat including pork to 145°F (63°C), with a 3-minute rest time before serving
- Fish and Shellfish to 145°F (63°C)

When plating, do not use the same platter to serve cooked food that you used to hold the raw meat. This goes for utensils as well – like tongs and spatulas – keeping raw meat juices away from cooked foods prevents the spread of potentially harmful bacteria. Unless utensils and dishes have been thoroughly washed with soap and hot water between transporting raw meats to the grill and removing cooked meats to bring to the table, you cannot use the same utensils and dishes.

**Destination #3 – The Return Home**



Stocked refrigerator with leftovers



Flames from grilling meat



If you're hungry, don't wait to go back for seconds! On 90°F or higher days, perishable foods not eaten within one hour should be thrown away. On other days (below 90°F), perishable foods not eaten or refrigerated within two hours should be tossed out.

When storing leftovers, fully cooked food can be stored in shallow containers in a cooler with other cold beverages. To be sure food is still good for the next day, promptly [refrigerate leftovers](#) in a cooler with ice and then in the fridge when you return home. However, if you are still unsure if the food is safe to keep, just remember – when in doubt, throw it out.

To learn more about foodborne illness, visit <http://www.stopfoodborneillness.org>

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Make sure that you are grilling meat at the proper temperature.

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