

Cookout Tips & Suggestions



- ✓ **Keep your grill clean and well-maintained.** Be sure to scrape and clean your grill's grates and inside surface between each use, removing any burnt food or debris. If using a gas grill, check the connection between the propane tank and the fuel line to be sure that it is working properly and not leaking.
- ✓ **Make safety a priority when using your grill.** Keep your grill away from flammable materials, and at least 10 feet from any structure, such as your house. Have a fire extinguisher accessible, and never leave your grill unattended once it has been lit. If using a charcoal grill, never use it indoors, even if ventilation is provided.
- ✓ **Practice safe food handling techniques** to reduce the risk of food borne illnesses. Wash your hands thoroughly before cooking and serving food. Keep raw meats in the refrigerator or in a cooler until cooking time. Separate raw meats from cooked foods and fresh fruits and vegetables. Never use the same platter and utensils that previously held raw meat, poultry or seafood to serve cooked foods. Cook meats to the proper temperature - beef to a minimum of 160° F or until the center is no longer pink and juices are clear, ground poultry to 165° F and poultry parts to 180° F.
 - Refrigerate any leftovers as soon as possible in shallow containers and discard any food that has been out of the refrigerator for more than two hours (one hour if the exposed to temperature greater than 90 degrees).
- ✓ **Offer healthy menu options.** Choose leaner cuts of beef, fish, or poultry instead of hot dogs, high fat hamburgers and sausages. Get creative and grill vegetables to add more texture and flavor to your meal. For a simple dessert, try grilling fruit, such as peaches and pineapple. Substitute low fat or fat free mayonnaise, yogurt or sour cream for the full fat versions in your favorite potato salad or coleslaw recipe. Substitute up to one-third of the oil called for in your favorite marinade recipe with an equal amount of frozen fruit juice concentrate or vegetable puree - marinades are a great way to add taste to your meats while acting as a barrier between your food and