BBQ IQ

Get Smart. Grill Safely.

Know the risks and get the tips for safely grilling and enjoying your favorite foods.

Plan to be safe.

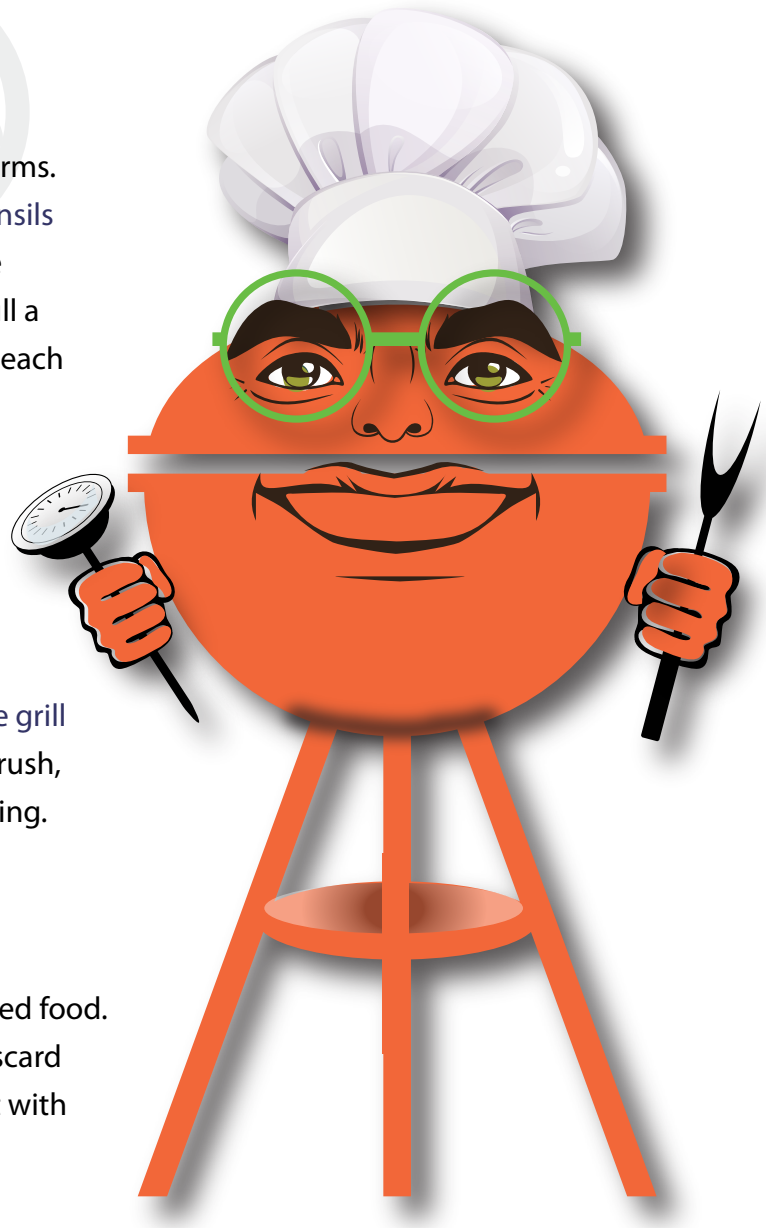
Risk: Food poisoning peaks in the summer months when warmer temperatures cause foodborne germs to flourish.

Tip: Check foods on recall list when planning your grill fest. When shopping, buy meat and poultry last, right before checkout. Separate raw meat and poultry from other food in your shopping cart. To guard against cross-contamination, put packages of raw meat and poultry into individual plastic bags.

Keep it clean. Stop the germs.

Risk: Dirty hands and prep surfaces can carry germs.

Tip: Wash hands, kitchen work surfaces, and utensils with soap and water immediately after they have been in contact with raw meat or poultry. Also, fill a spray bottle with water and one tablespoon of bleach to keep handy to wipe off surfaces and utensils.



Groom your grill and tools.

Risk: Wire bristles from grill cleaning brushes may dislodge and stick into food on the grill.

Tip: Use a moist cloth or paper towel to clean the grill surface before cooking. If you use a wire bristle brush, thoroughly inspect the grill's surface before cooking.

Curb co-mingling.

Risk: Raw meat juices can spread germs to cooked food.

Tip: Place cooked meats on a clean plate and discard marinades and sauces that have come in contact with raw meat juices.

Cook it well. Keep it hot.

(recommended internal temps)

Grilling:

- 145° F - whole cuts of beef, pork, lamb and veal (stand-time of 3 minutes at this temperature)
- 145° F - fish
- 160° F - hamburgers and other ground beef
- 165° F - all poultry and pre-cooked meats, like hot dogs

Smoking:

- 250° F - 300° F - inside smoker

After Grilling:

- 140° F or warmer - until it's served

Check to be sure.

Risk: Meat and poultry may brown quickly when grilled and appear done, even when not.

Tip: Use a meat thermometer to ensure grilled and smoked meats have reached the recommended internal temperatures to kill harmful germs.

Treat leftovers right.

- Keep leftovers in an insulated (40° F or below) cooler while transporting.
- Refrigerate leftover meat and poultry within two hours of cooking or one hour if above 90° F. Frozen leftovers should keep for about four months.
- Divide leftovers into smaller portions. Refrigerate or freeze in covered shallow containers for faster cooling.
- Reheat cooked leftovers to 165° F using a food thermometer.

Learn more.

- www.fsis.usda.gov
- www.fightbac.org/safe-food-handling
- www.foodsafety.gov/recalls/recent/index.html

CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention