



Is It Done Yet? Summer Grilling Safety

nal temperatures keeps your family safe from harmful bacteria on food.

Seeing Isn't Believing

If a hamburger is brown in the middle, is it done? Not necessarily. Looking at the color and texture of food is not enough. According to the USDA, 1 out of every 4 hamburgers turns brown before it reaches a safe internal temperature.

The only way to know whether a food is safely cooked is to check the internal temperature with a food thermometer. Food thermometers are affordable and easy to use—and could be what keeps you from getting ill.

USDA Recommended Safe Minimum Internal Temperatures Chart
 Beef, Lamb and Veal, steaks, roasts, chops: 145 F
 Fish: 145 F
 Pork: 160 F
 Ground Meats: 160 F
 All Poultry: 165 F
 To learn more about food thermometers and safe food preparation, transportation and storage, visit www.IsItDoneYet.gov.

Using a Food Thermometer!

* Use an instant-read food thermometer to check the internal temperature toward the end of cooking time.

* Place it in the thickest part of the food, but don't let it touch bone, fat or gristle.

* Check the temperature against the USDA Recommended Safe Minimum Internal Temperature Chart to make sure your food has reached a safe temperature.

* Clean your food thermometer with hot, soapy water before and after each use.

And an added bonus of using a food thermometer—it helps you avoid overcooking that delicious steak.

Fiesta Burgers

- Makes 4 servings
- 1 1/2 pounds ground beef
- 1/4 cup onion, chopped
- 2 tablespoons red bell pepper, finely chopped
- 3 tablespoons picante sauce or salsa
- 2 teaspoons prepared Dijon-style mustard
- 1 tablespoon prepared horseradish (optional)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 4 sesame seed hamburger buns
- Leaf lettuce and sliced tomatoes

Wash hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds before handling the meat.

* In bowl, mix ground beef with onion, red pepper, picante sauce or salsa, mustard, horseradish (if desired), salt and pepper.

* Form into four burgers, about 3/4-inch thick.

* Wash hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds after handling the meat.

* Using utensils, place burgers on grill that has reached medium-high heat.

* Check each burger with a food thermometer after approximately 10-15 minutes. Turn burgers as needed. A hamburger is safe when it reaches 160 F.

* Clean thermometer between uses with hot, soapy water.

* When taking food off the grill, don't put the cooked items on the same platter that held the raw meat unless the dish is washed with soap and hot water.

* Place burgers on buns and top with condiments and garnishes of choice.

* After checking the final temperature, remember to clean the food thermometer with hot, soapy water.

* Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours (1 hour if the temperature is above 90 F).

Courtesy of Family Features

Foodborne illnesses increase in the summer because the same warm temperatures best for picnics and cookouts also are ideal for bacteria to grow. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that every year about 76 million people in the United States become ill from harmful bacteria in food. And summertime is the prime time for more people to become ill from their food.

After eating contaminated food, people can develop anything from a short, mild illness — often called foodborne illness or food poisoning — to a life-threatening disease. Particularly vulnerable are pregnant women, small children, older adults and people with weakened immune systems.

The good news is that microbes are killed by heat. Cooking meat, poultry and egg dishes to safe minimum inter-

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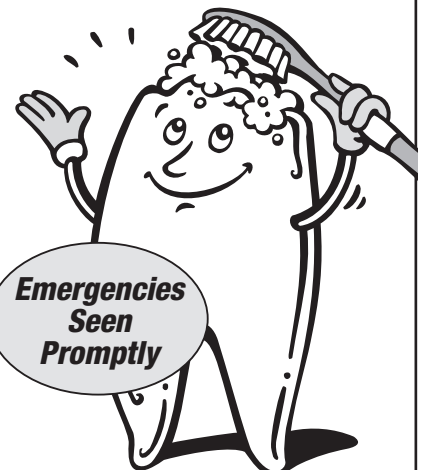
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