

# To Your Health

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*Summer is here! Keep it safe, keep it simple, and keep it fun.*

### Picnic Food Safety

Points to have in mind to avoid foodborne illness when picnicking:

- \* Plan the menu with an eye to safe food handling. Be sure that you can keep hot foods hot (above 140 degrees F) and cold foods cold (below 40 degrees F).
- \* Plan just the right amount of food to take so that you won't have to worry about leftovers.
- \* Pre-cook foods in plenty of time to thoroughly chill them in the refrigerator.
- \* Seal all food tightly in a plastic container or bag.
- \* Pack your cooler with enough ice to keep food below 40 degrees F (20-25% ice).
- \* Pack food from the refrigerator into the cooler just before leaving home.
- \* Keep the food cooler closed and out of the sun. Keep beverages in a separate cooler.
- \* Only remove the amount of food from the cooler that can be cooked or eaten at one time.
- \* Pack enough utensils and platters for both raw and cooked foods.

\* When taking foods off the grill, put cooked items on a *clean* plate, not the one that held raw meat.

Source: *Food for Fitness and Fun*, July 2006  
[www.extension.iastate.edu/food](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/food)

### Picnic Site Safety

Summer picnics are fun. We can get so engrossed in the surroundings and scenery though that we forget to look down and check out our eating surface.

Picnic tables – at home, in a public park or outdoor dining area - are “busy places,” and breeding grounds for germs. Even if the picnic table appears clean, proceed with caution. If you're picnicking at home, clean the table with soap and warm water. Otherwise, make moist disinfectant wipes your traveling companion. Stash them in your vehicle, backpack, beach tote or purse for quick swipe-and-wipe cleaning for picnic tables and benches.

Once the table is clean, don't forget about your hands. If there's no soap and water nearby, use a moist disposable wipe to clean your hands.

Remember, whenever handling and serving food, it is

important that all food contact surfaces are as clean and sanitary as possible.

### Great Grilling

Grilling is cooking made easy and healthy. Grilled foods require little additional fat for cooking, and they require minimal seasoning. For healthy, great tasting grilling:

- \* Choose low fat meats such as skinless chicken breasts, pork tenderloin, fish and shrimp.
- \* Marinades are a great way to enhance flavors, tenderize meats, and keep foods from drying out when grilling. They can be made with vinegar, fruit juices, soy sauce, or wine
- \* Soak dried herbs, fresh citrus peel and wood chips in water for 10 minutes. Then add to coals. Add more every 15 minutes or so for a pleasant smoke flavor.
- \* Wrap fish in foil packets to retain natural flavors, keep it from falling apart, and to protect it from fire and smoke.
- \* Thread summer vegetables like eggplant, squash, bell peppers, or cherry tomatoes on skewers and grill for a tasty side dish. Before grilling, spray with a vegetable oil spray – away from the fire; grill quickly until tender.

\*Grilled fruits make a great dessert. Try bananas, pineapples, mangoes, peaches. Fruit should be halved, pits removed, and place on the grill pulp side down.

Source: *Food for Fitness and Fun*, July 2006  
[www.extension.iastate.edu/food](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/food)

## Serve a Salad

There are various reasons for eating a salad...for the color, texture, taste...for variety, or adventure in eating.

...Whatever your reason, having a salad every day could help you eat less calories.

One study showed that participants who ate a low-fat salad before a meal consumed fewer calories at that meal as compared to those who did not have a salad. But be careful! Those who loaded their salad with high-fat cheese and dressing actually consumed *more* calories. The study authors concluded, "Consuming a large portion of low-energy-dense food at the start of a meal may be an effective strategy for weight management."

*Eating salad helps you -*  
..control your weight.  
..get your fruits, vegetables.  
..lower your risk for heart disease and cancer.  
..keep your eyes healthy.  
..have good digestion and regularity.

Next time you're grilling, include a salad on the menu.

### Skinny Tossed Salad

6 cups ready-to-serve romaine  
½ cup cucumber, sliced

10 fresh cherry tomatoes, halved  
2/3 cup grated carrots  
1 teaspoon olive oil  
3 tablespoons cider vinegar  
Black pepper to taste  
Place romaine, cucumber, tomatoes, and carrots in a large bowl. Chill until ready to serve – up to 24 hours.  
When ready to serve, toss salad together with vinegar, oil and pepper.

Serve immediately.

(Serves 4)

Source: Food & Health Communications, Inc.  
'monthly tips,' 'monthly recipe' web pages

## Let's Move

### Stretch for fitness

..Stretch often for health and wellbeing. Stretching is the simplest of all physical activities. And it may be one of the most essential in our sedentary lives. Regular stretching reduces stress, fatigue, and muscle tension – while improving circulation and mental alertness.

..Stretch everywhere for maximum flexibility. Think about where you spend "down" time – like talking on the phone, working at the computer, watching television. All of these usually sedentary times can easily become an opportunity to improve your flexibility, while energizing your body and mind.

Just adding 5 to 10 minutes of gentle stretching to your daily routine can make a big difference. While stretching, always breathe easily and relax into the stretch, without bouncing. Focus on the muscles or joints being

stretched – and listen to your body.

Source: *Eat Right Montana*, Montana Dietetic Association

## Get Fit At Home

**Walk:** Two or three 10-minute walks in your neighborhood can add up some health benefits.

**Bike:** Keep your bicycles – and helmets – ready to go at a moment's notice, like for a quick jaunt to the grocery store.

**Mow:** Forget a riding lawn mower; a push mower is great for getting more steps in your day.

**Step:** You don't need a step machine. Just go up and down the stairs as often as you can.

**Laugh and play:** Add some laughter and play into your life. Research shows that they can have powerful health benefits.

Source: *Eat Right Montana*, Montana Dietetic Association

For more nutrition and health information go to

[www.extension.iastate.edu/nutrition](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/nutrition)

Scroll to the bottom of the page for "Food, Recipe and Activity of the Week." Sign up to receive these tips weekly in your e-mail.

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