

# HEALTHY SUMMER EATING

## The ABCs of a Healthy BBQ

With the summer season underway, many of us are ready to fire up the grill. Whether you're grilling up your favourite outdoor meal or trying something new, here are some helpful tips to deliver summer eats that are tasty, healthy, and safe!

### At the store



- 🛒 Pick up meats and cold foods at the end of your shopping trip.
- 🛒 Keep meats separate when bagging groceries. Packaging can leak and you don't want juices contaminating other foods.
- 🛒 Get groceries home within 1 hour. Cars heat up fast in the summer!
- 🛒 Shop for low-fat marinades. Try salsa, low-calorie salad dressings, or wine. Pineapple, papaya, and citrus fruit juices boost flavour without extra fat. Citrus zests are a great addition too!
- 🛒 Don't forget fruits and vegetables to boost the nutrition of your meals. Grilling also brings out some great flavours.

### Before you grill

- 🔥 Be careful if rinsing raw meat! Water can splash bacteria around the kitchen.
- 🔥 If you're using frozen meat, defrost it in the refrigerator.
- 🔥 Use separate cutting boards when preparing different meats, vegetables, and fruits for grilling.
- 🔥 Cut off visible fat from steaks, chops, and other meats for a leaner meal.
- 🔥 Marinate meats and vegetables in the refrigerator and discard used marinades afterward. Make a fresh batch for basting.
- 🔥 Use hot, soapy water to clean work surfaces and utensils after preparing foods. Don't forget to wash your hands before and after handling foods.
- 🔥 Oil the grill with a small amount of cooking oil to prevent sticking. This also helps define those appealing grill marks on your food.





## Cooking on the grill

- 🔥 Use different plates and utensils for raw and cooked foods.
- 🔥 Check the temperature at the thickest part of the meat.
- 🔥 Avoid flattening patties as they cook to keep burgers juicy!
- 🔥 Cook thinner pieces of meat faster at a higher heat, and thicker pieces slowly at low heat.
- 🔥 Give meat and veggies a quick check before flipping them. If they are sticking to the grill, they aren't ready to be flipped!
- 🔥 Avoid food-borne bacteria! Use a thermometer and cook meats properly: steaks 145° F, ground meats and pork 160° F, poultry 165° F
- 🔥 Don't forget to protect yourself from the sun when cooking outdoors. Wear sunscreen and a hat, and stay hydrated.

## Storing & enjoying food

- 🍴 Keep uncooked food in the fridge until you're ready to grill. Pack food into a cooler with ice packs if you're transporting them somewhere.
- 🍴 Use a clean plate when taking foods off the grill.
- 🍴 Cut off blackened pieces of meat. Eating charred meat frequently may increase your risk of cancer!
- 🍴 Keep cooked meat hot (at least 140° F) until you're ready to serve.
- 🍴 Refrigerate leftovers within two hours of cooking – within one hour if it's a hot day!
- 🍴 Cool and store leftovers in shallow containers so that they cool quickly.
- 🍴 Reheat cooked meats safely to a temperature of 165° F.



**Sources** <https://www.usda.gov/media/blog/2011/05/25/cooking-meat-check-new-recommended-temperatures>  
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