



BONUS ARTICLE

Foodborne illnesses are no picnic

At a summertime picnic, no one wants to save a seat at the table for foodborne bacteria. These nasty germs multiply rapidly in hot weather and can spoil your party in more ways than one.

Foodborne diseases can bring nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and stomach cramps, and can be life-threatening. To keep your picnic healthy as well as delicious, take time to follow some food safety steps:

Keep your cool. Cold food should be stored at 40 degrees F. Place it in a cooler with ice or ice packs.

Use the deep-freeze. If you're taking meat, poultry, or seafood along, pack it in your cooler while it's still frozen.

Keep a lid on it. To keep contents cold longer, open the cooler infrequently.

Separate the drinks. People are likely to open and reopen a cooler often as they look for a beverage. Pack perishable foods

in a separate cooler, so they don't get exposed to the warm air as often.

Be careful with meat. Raw meat, poultry and seafood should be securely wrapped. Don't let their juices contaminate fruits and vegetables that are eaten raw.

Wash it off. All fresh fruits and vegetables should be rinsed before their packed. Dry them with a clean towel or paper cloth.

Wash it off, part II. Plates or utensils that have held raw meat, poultry, or seafood shouldn't be reused unless

they've been washed in hot, soapy water. Remember this rule when grilling. Don't put cooked food on an unwashed plate.

Keep it hot. Hot food should be kept above 140 degrees F. Don't let it sit out for more than two hours, or one hour if the temperature is above 90 degrees. ♦

