

Safe Picnics

Target Audience:

Adults
Seniors

Topic Area:

Keeping Germs Out of My Food

- Wash their hands with soap and warm running water before and after touching food, and after using the toilet and touching money, diapers and pets.
- Keep cold foods and refrigerators between 32°F and 40°F.
- Keep raw meats and their juices and eggs from coming in contact with other foods that will not be cooked before they are eaten
- Check that meats, poultry, eggs, casseroles and reheated foods are safe to eat by using a food thermometer.
- Use air-tight wraps, bags or containers to store food

Safe Picnics

Lesson Creator(s):

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Purpose:

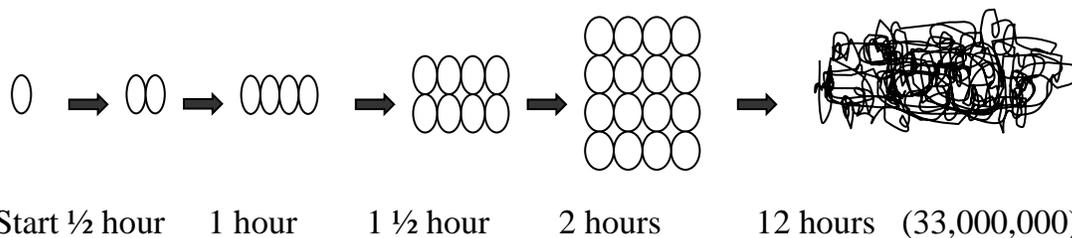
The purpose of this lesson is to help participants to determine safe food handling practices for when they picnic or attend other outdoor eating events.

What the Nutrition Educator Needs To Know To Answer Questions:

Food Storage

Foods that are not stored safely can be a good place for germs to grow. These germs can make you very sick. To keep your food safe you should store it using clean foil, plastic bags and plastic wraps, or airtight plastic containers. This will help to keep your food full of flavor and safe. You can look in the **Taste It or Toss It: Is This Food Too Old To Eat?** lesson for food storage times. To keep your food fresh, keep your refrigerator at 40°F or below. This is cold enough to keep germs from growing, but not cold enough to freeze your food. ^{1, 2, 3}

When food is left out of the refrigerator germs can grow quickly. Germs live where they have warmth, food, and moisture. The picture below gives you an idea of how fast germs can grow on foods that are left sitting out. ⁴



All foods have some germs. But if these germs keep growing they can add up to millions in a short time as you can see from the diagram above. This is why you should never leave foods out of the refrigerator for more than 2 hours. On hot days, foods need to go back into the refrigerator within 1 hour. ^{2, 5, 6}

Picnic Foods

Some foods that you bring to a picnic are safe and do not need to be handled with care to prevent germs from growing. Other foods need special care to stay safe. Salads like egg or potato salad and raw meats can be places for germs to grow. These foods need special care in order to be safe to eat.³ We will call foods that do not need to be put in coolers, safe foods. You may decide to keep safe foods in a cooler to prevent them from getting too hot or melting. It is OK to leave unopened canned meats or canned fish out of the cooler because they have been heat-treated to give them a long shelf life. But once a can is opened, germs can grow and the food needs special care.¹ You can do things to keep your food safe like using clean silverware, keeping salads cold, and keeping raw meats from touching other foods that will not be cooked can help prevent germs from growing.²

Safe Picnic Foods¹

- Nuts and peanut butter
- Breads, crackers, chips, and cookies
- Jam, honey, syrup, and candy
- Dry cereals and powdered milk (until mixed with water)
- Raw, canned, and dried fruits
- Raw vegetables
- Pickles, relish, mustard, ketchup, and salad dressings
- Dried meats like beef jerky and sausage
- Canned meat and canned fish (before opened)

Special Care Picnic Foods^{3, 5}

- Raw and cooked meat, poultry, and meat salads
- Hot, ready-made foods like fried chicken, gravy, ribs, or macaroni & cheese
- Raw and cooked fish, and fish salads
- Cooked fruits, vegetables, peas, and beans
- Milk and milk products like cheese, yogurt, pudding, and whipped cream
- Shellfish
- Packaged or fresh deli meats like bologna, ham, salami, and liverwurst and hot dogs.
- Sandwich spreads like tuna fish, egg salad, and chicken salad
- Canned meats, fish, and mixed dinners after they have been opened
- Eggs and egg products
- Toppings like mayonnaise, sour cream, and butter or any foods made with these toppings

Making Food Safe at Your Picnic^{1, 2, 5}

Here are some rules to help make your picnic foods safe:

1. Wash your hands with soap and warm running water before and after touching food. Wash your hands after using the toilet, touching money, diapers, and pets.
2. Place foods in a cooler as soon as you make them or take them out of the refrigerator. You should pack these things in your cooler last so they stay cold longer. At your picnic be sure that cold foods go back into the cooler if you are not going to use them all up. Keep these foods in air tight containers or wraps
3. Wrap raw meats in air tight containers or wraps to keep them from coming in contact with other foods that will not be cooked.
4. Use separate cutting boards at home while you are preparing food or at your picnic if you prepare food there, Use one for raw meat, poultry and fish and separate one for fruits and vegetables. If you only have 1 cutting board then, wash it well and rinse it in a bleach solution after using it to cut meat.

Picnic Packing Tips

Packing your special care picnic foods safely can keep you and your family from getting sick. Use these tips to help you:

1. Wash your hands with warm, soapy water before and after packing your cooler.^{2, 3}
2. Pack foods that need to be kept hot in insulated bags, if you can. Hot, cooked foods need to be kept above 140°F. On hot days, these foods need to be eaten within one hour, or put into a cooler.²
3. Pack foods that need to be kept cold in a cooler. Cold foods need be kept cold at 40°F or below..²
4. It is best to use a separate cooler for raw meats. If you must use only one cooler, pack raw meats by wrapping them tightly in plastic wrap or foil or store them in an airtight container. This will prevent meat juices from dripping onto other foods in your cooler. ^{2 6}
5. Pack foods in your cooler tightly and use ice or ice packs to keep them as cold as possible.^{2, 3}
6. Always pack foods right from the refrigerator. Do not let foods sit on the counter.
7. Freeze yogurt, applesauce, juice boxes, or other foods to pack in your cooler. They will thaw slowly and keep the other foods cold.⁶
8. Pack a meat thermometer or a digital, instant read thermometer to check if meats are cooked to a safe temperature.⁷
9. Bring soap with you to wash your hands. If you know the picnic site has no running water, pack a jug of water, towels or bring hand sanitizer.⁵
10. Keep your cooler inside the car while you travel to the picnic. Do not put coolers in the trunk of a car, because they can get very hot.³
11. Bring plenty of plates and utensils so that uncooked meat and other foods can be kept separate.²

Keeping food safe at a picnic or family outing is hard. In the summer, moisture and hot weather help germs grow. If you follow a few safety steps, you can make sure that your summer picnic is safe.

Follow these tips:

What to Do with Your Cooler⁶

When you get to the picnic site put the cooler in the shade. If there is no shade, cover the cooler with a light colored towel or blanket. If you are at the beach, you can keep the cooler under an umbrella. Make sure the cooler is away from direct sunlight. Try not to open and close the cooler lid too many times. If it is a hot day, do not leave food out of the cooler for more than 1 hour.

Cook and Serve with Clean Hands^{2, 5}

Washing your hands before touching food is just as important on a picnic as it is in your home. You wouldn't want to eat food that was prepared by someone with dirty hands. Bring some soap with you on your picnic and wash your hands before making the food. Then, air-dry your hands, or wipe them with clean paper towels. If there is no running water at the site, bring a plastic jug of water. You can also bring hand sanitizer or hand wipes instead.

Keep Hot Foods Hot and Cold Foods Cold^{2, 5}

If you bring hot foods to your picnic, eat these foods within 1 hour and put any leftovers into your cooler. If you need to cook your food at the picnic, take the food out of the cooler just before you are ready to cook it. Again, be sure to eat the cooked foods within one hour. Any food that is not eaten within one hour should be put back in the cooler. As long as your cooler is kept at 40°F or below the food in it will be safe to eat at a later time. When you get home from your picnic, put the food right into the refrigerator. If you think a food was not kept cool enough and may not be safe to eat, throw it out!

Grilling Tips²

If you plan to grill at your picnic, keep the raw meat in the cooler until you plan to cook it. It is not safe to look at meat to tell if the meat is cooked. The only way to be sure meat is fully cooked is to use a thermometer. If you want to know what safe cooking temperatures are, look at the **Guide to Safe Grilling** handout. Always serve cooked meat on a clean plate. Do not use the plate that carried raw meat, unless you wash it with soapy and warm water. If you used a marinade for the raw meat, throw it away! Do not put the marinade on cooked meats or use it again on other raw meats.

References:

1. Kinsey, J, Muscio, C. *Jersey Summer Shore Safety: Keeping Food Safe When Packing a Picnic*. Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station. Cooperative Extension Fact Sheet FS 1196. 2012. At: <https://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/fs1196/jersey-summer-shore-safety.asp>
2. *Eating Outdoors, Handling Food Safely*. Federal Drug Administration. May 9, 2015. At: <http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/ucm109899.htm>
3. *Picnic Safety*., Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. 2015. At: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsafety/content/picnic-safety>.
4. *Describe the conditions favorable to the growth of bacteria in food*. Department of Food, Nutrition and Packaging Science, Clemson University. 2012. At: <http://www.foodsafetysite.com/educators/competencies/general/bacteria/bac2.html>
5. *Barbeque and Food Safety*. US Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service. 2013. At: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/safe-food-handling/barbecue-and-food-safety/CT_Index
6. *Handling Food Safely on the Road*. US Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service. 2013. At: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/safe-food-handling/handling-food-safely-on-the-road/ct_index
7. *Perfect Food Safe Picnics*. Food Safety.Gov. 2012. At: <http://www.foodsafety.gov/blog/perfectfood.html>

For Additional Reading:

“USDA: Summer Food Safety Resources; June 26, 2012.
<http://snap.nal.usda.gov/resource-library/summer-sizzlers/summer-food-safety-resources>

On the Road Again – Summer Travel and Picnics: 2010 Partnership for Food Safety Education; Fight Bac
<http://www.fightbac.org/safe-food-handling/safety-in-all-seasons/135-on-the-road-again>

Safe Picnics

Main Themes:

- Nutrition & Diet Cooking & Food Storage Shopping
Budgeting Safety & Sanitation

Materials Needed:

- Handout: Picnic Packing Tips (1 for each participant)
- Handout: Safe and Special Care Picnic Foods (1 for each participant)
(These 2 handouts can be copied front to back)
- Handout: Barbecue Mistakes (1 for each participant)
- Handout: Barbecue Mistakes Answer Key (1 for the teacher)
- Handout: Guide to Safe Grilling (1 for each participant)
- Poster Boards or Paper: 1 for every 3 people
- Markers for poster boards or pens or pencils for paper: 1 for every 3 people
- Highlighters: 2 different colors for every 2 people

Time the Activity is Expected to Take:

- Before You Begin: 5 minutes
- Activity 1: 5 minutes
- Activity 2: 15-20 minutes
- Activity 3: 15-20 minutes
- Next Week's Goals: 5 minutes

Safe Picnics

Lesson Plan

Before You Begin (5 minutes)

Be sure to ask the participants if they worked on their goals from the lesson the week before. Ask them which goals they worked on and how or what they did to work on them. Try to get a couple of people to tell the class what they did. If they did not work on the goals, remind them to work on them before the next class.

Activity 1: Let's Talk Picnics (5 minutes)

The purpose of this activity is to introduce the topic of today's lesson.

1. Begin the class by starting a talk about picnics. Ask these questions:
 - What kinds of picnics and outdoor eating events do you go to?
 - When was the last time you went on a picnic?
 - What are some foods you like to bring to a picnic?
 - Can you name any foods that might make you get sick at picnics?
 - Has anyone ever gotten sick from eating picnic foods? If so, which foods?
 - What food safety rules do you follow for picnics?
2. To end this activity, tell the class that the topic of today's lesson is food safety for picnics. Then, begin activity 2.

Activity 2: Picnic Pointers (15-20 minutes)

The purpose of this activity is to have participants plan a picnic that they would like to have.

1. Break the class into groups of 3 people. Give each person a copy of the **Safe and Special Care Picnic Foods, Picnic Packing Tips, and Guide to Grilling** handouts. Also, give each group a piece of poster board or the paper, and markers, pens or pencils. Explain to the groups that special care items are foods that spoil quickly and need special storage. Review all of the handouts with the class. Ask the class to share any tips that they use to store food safely.
2. Now, tell the class to plan a picnic they would like to go to. They must bring their favorite safe and special care picnic foods. For each special care food that they list, they must also tell how to store it safely.

3. After each group has finished, have a person from each group describe to the class their picnic and how they would keep their food safe. Have the class talk about the safety tips named and come up with other ideas to keep the picnic safe.

Activity 3: Barbecue Mistakes (15-20 minutes)

The purpose of this activity is to have the class find the common mistakes in the story. For this activity, they should work in groups of two

1. Divide the class into groups of two and pass out the Barbecue Mistakes handout and highlighters.
2. Have them follow along while you read the handout. You could ask someone you know is a good reader to read the handout to the class.
3. Have the class talk with their partners about what they think the food safety mistakes were and what could have been done to avoid them. Ask the groups to highlight or underline the food safety mistakes on the handout with one of their 2 highlighters. Walk around the room and help the groups come up with ideas if they need help.
4. Ask the class to write down some ways to fix the mistakes that they found on the back of the handout or be able to describe them to the class.
5. After about 5 to 10 minutes, ask each group to share one of the mistakes that they noticed and how they planned to fix it. Ask the rest of the class if they can come up with some other ideas to solve the problem. Have the class use a different colored highlighter to mark any mistakes that they had not found on their own. Use your answer key to see if all the mistakes were found. If not, point them out and discuss them. Make sure participants have fixed all of the mistakes on their handouts.
6. Tell the class that they can take the handouts home. This way they will not make these mistakes when they go on picnics.

Next Week's Goals (5 minutes)

1. Ask the participants to name one thing that they learned in today's class that they will use. Make sure that each learning objective is mentioned, and if not, be sure to say the objective again.. Ask them to choose a goal to work on during the week. Let them know that they will be asked to share how they did at the next class.
2. Ask if anyone has comments, suggestions, or questions.

3. Thank the participants for coming and tell them what the next lesson will be about.

For the Teacher: What Makes This Lesson Behaviorally Focused?

- Before you begin , give participants a chance to share the changes they made from the previous lesson. If participants didn't get a chance to work on changes, they can get tips and encouragement from other participants in the class and plan how they will make changes before the next class.
- Activity 1 gets the participants to describe their own out door eating experiences. They consider their own behaviors that may have resulted in illness and how they currently practice safe food handling at these events. Also , the educator gains important information about the behaviors of the target audience. This allows the educator to have a better understanding of the lesson and teach the lesson easily to the audience.
- In Activity 2, participants are asked to create a picnic with foods that they would enjoy and take on their own picnics. They will find special care foods that they would really use and how they can keep them safe.
- In Activity 3, the participants are asked to find the food handling, packing, and cooking mistakes in the story. They will discuss with each other ideas on how to avoid making the same mistakes when they go on a picnic. They will also discuss how they will change their own picnic behaviors.
- In Next Week's Goals, the participants are invited to name one thing that they learned during the class that they will use. They will choose the behaviors that they will work on during the coming week.



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Safe and Special Care Picnic Foods

Safe Picnic Foods

- Nuts and peanut butter
- Breads, crackers, chips, and cookies
- Jam, honey, syrup and candy
- Dry cereals and powdered milk (until mixed with water)
- Raw, canned, and dried fruits
- Raw vegetables
- Pickles, relish, mustard, ketchup, and salad dressings
- Dried meats like beef jerky and sausage
- Canned fish and meat (until opened)



Special Care Picnic Foods

- Raw and cooked meat, poultry, and salads made with meat
- Hot, ready-made foods like fried chicken, gravy, ribs, or macaroni & cheese
- Raw and cooked fish, shellfish, and fish salads
- Cooked fruits, vegetables, peas, and beans
- Milk and milk products like cheese, yogurt, pudding, and whipped cream
- Packaged meats like bologna, hot dogs, ham, salami, and liverwurst
- Sandwich spreads like tuna or chicken salads, and chopped liver
- Canned meats, fish, and mixed dinners after you open them
- Eggs and foods made with eggs
- Toppings like mayonnaise, sour cream, and butter or any foods made with these toppings.



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Picnic Packing Tips



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2. Pack foods that need to be kept hot in insulated bags, if possible. Hot, cooked foods need to be kept hot above 140°F. On hot days, these foods need to be eaten within one hour, or put into a cooler.
3. Pack foods that need to be kept cold in a cooler. Cold foods need to be kept cold below 40°F.
4. It is best to use a separate cooler for raw meats. If you use only one cooler, pack raw meats by wrapping them tightly in plastic wrap or foil. This will prevent meat juices from dripping onto other foods in your cooler.
5. Pack foods in your cooler tightly and use ice or ice packs to keep them as cold as possible.
6. Always pack foods right from the refrigerator. Do not let foods sit on the counter before putting them into the cooler.
7. Wrap foods in plastic wrap or foil, or by storing them in an airtight plastic container to keep them from touching other foods.
8. Freeze yogurt, applesauce, juice boxes, or other foods to pack in your cooler. They will thaw slowly and keep the other foods cold.
9. Pack a meat thermometer or a digital, instant-read thermometer to check if meats are cooked to a safe temperature.
10. Bring soap with you to wash your hands. If you know the picnic site has no running water, pack a jug of water, too.
11. Keep your cooler inside the car while you travel to the picnic. Do not put coolers in the trunk of a car, because they can get very hot.

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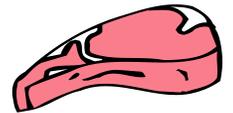
Guide to Safe Grilling

When Grilling Meats:

- Use a meat thermometer to make sure meats are fully cooked.
- Do not serve cooked food on the same plate that held raw meat. Serve cooked meats and other foods on a clean plate. Throw away leftover marinade. Do not re-use it or put it on cooked meats.

How can I be sure the meat is fully cooked?

Use the chart below as a guide to cook meats to the right temperature. Always test meats with a thermometer to make sure they are cooked. You can not tell by the color of the meat if it is cooked to a safe temperature.



MEAT	TEMPERATURE
Beef (steaks, roasts)	145°F
Ground beef patties	160°F
Fresh pork (ribs, chops)	145°F
Ground chicken & turkey patties	165°F
Chicken & turkey (all parts)	165°F

Where do I put the thermometer?

- **Ground Meats and Hamburger Patties**—Insert the thermometer into the side of the patties.
- **Chicken and Turkey**—Insert it into the thigh area, near the breast of the chicken or turkey. Do not let the thermometer touch any bones.
- **Beef and Pork (Roasts, Steaks, Chops, and Ribs)**—Put the thermometer into the center of the thickest part of the meat, away from fat, bone, and gristle.

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Barbecue Mistakes

Spring was here at last! The sun was warm and Mom and Dad could not wait to take their kids for a picnic in the park. Mom had only one thing left to do and that was to pack the cooler with a tasty lunch.

The cooler was smaller than Mom thought! Packing this cooler was going to be a tight squeeze. After she added the juice packs, fruit, and potato salad, she noticed that there was no room left for the ice. She decided the refrigerated juices would keep everything cold enough, so she took the cooler to the car.

At the picnic site, Mom and Dad took the cooler from the trunk of the car and placed it on the picnic table next to the playground. What a great, sunny place to rest and watch the kids!

After a while, the kids became thirsty and hungry. They opened the lid to the cooler and took out juice boxes. A few minutes they were in the cooler again to grab some fruit before heading off to the swings. Mom looked into the cooler to see if the hamburgers were thawed. She saw that some of the hamburger juices had dripped onto the fruit, so she wiped the fruit clean with a napkin.

Dad suggested a game of volleyball. The family left the hamburgers on the table to finish thawing and started their game. Their game ended an hour later. They were pretty hot, so they decided to go for a swim before eating. They came back to the picnic table about 2 hours later. They were all very hungry now! Dad took the plate of thawed hamburgers from the table and started up the grill. When the burgers looked done, Dad put them back on the plate, and then poured the great marinade the burgers had soaked in on top. They each ate until they could eat no more. What a great picnic! Until...

Guess what happened two hours later?

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Barbecue Mistakes

Answer Key

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