

BROOKLINE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Food Safety Tips

Foodborne disease is responsible for an estimated 76 million illnesses, over 300,000 hospitalizations and 5,000 deaths in the United States each year. Since summer is the season for cookouts and picnics, many opportunities for foodborne illness arise. Follow these tips to help protect your family against foodborne illness at home.

- While shopping, select frozen foods and perishables last and refrigerate them within 1 hour.
- Always wash hands with hot, soapy water before and after handling food.
- Defrost meats and other frozen foods in the refrigerator, microwave or in cold running water. (Defrosting at room temperature allows for the rapid growth of microorganisms that cause foodborne illness.)
- Marinate food in the refrigerator, not on the counter. Discard marinade after use.
- Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly.
- Keep raw meat, poultry and fish away from cooked or ready to eat foods.
- Cook foods thoroughly to safe temperatures (for 15 seconds); Use a food thermometer to check temperatures.
 - Beef; 140° F (60° C)
 - pork; 150° F (66° C)
 - ground beef; 155° F (68° C)
 - poultry, stuffing, stuffed meats; 165° F (74° C)
 - reheated leftovers; 165° F (74° C)
- Keep hot foods hot ($\geq 140^\circ$ F) and cold foods cold ($\leq 41^\circ$ F).
- Promptly refrigerate leftovers in small, shallow containers.