



Food Safety Tips For Barbecuing Hamburgers

Getting ready for the sizzle

- At the grocery store pack raw meat separately from other products in your bags or cart;
- Wash your hands thoroughly before and after handling any raw food – especially meat, poultry and seafood;
- Use hot soapy water to clean all surfaces (refrigerators, counters, dishes, utensils, thermometers, etc.) that come in contact with raw meat;
- Make burger patties thin so that they cook all the way through;
- Do not let ready-to-eat foods like lettuce, tomatoes, cheese, etc. contact raw meat or its juices; and
- Pre-heat the gas barbecue before starting to cook. If using a charcoal barbecue, use enough charcoal and wait until it is glowing red before starting to cook.



Are your burgers ready yet?

- Your beef burger is done at 71°C (160°F);
- Colour alone is not considered a reliable indicator that a burger is safe to eat — burgers can turn brown before all the disease-causing bacteria are killed;
- Reduce the heat or raise the height of the grill if food starts to burn during cooking — remember it's the internal temperature of the patty that is important;
- Probe type food thermometers with digital read-outs work best for determining if your burger is done. This will protect your friends and family from foodborne illness and will keep you from over or under cooking the burgers;
- Make sure all patties are ready! If you are cooking more than one, take the temperature in several of the thickest patties;
- Remove the patty from the grill and insert the thermometer at least an inch through the side of the patty as close to the middle as possible;
- Keep on cooking! Continue cooking your burgers if any reading is less than 71°C (160°F);
- Remember to wash the thermometer in between temperature measurements;
- Oven-safe meat thermometers designed for testing whole poultry and roasts during cooking are **not** suitable for measuring the temperature of beef patties; and
- Use clean utensils and plates when removing cooked meats from the heat source.

It's ready and there's some left over!

- Cover and store leftover cooked food in the refrigerator or cooler within 2 hours; and
- Reheat leftovers to 74°C (165°F).

For more tips on food safety, visit the Health Canada Web site at <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/food-aliment>

