

Advisory: Barbecue (BBQ) Safety

Managing Food

Cooking meat on a barbecue

When you're cooking any kind of meat on a barbecue, such as poultry (chicken or turkey), pork, steak, burgers or sausages, make sure:

- the coals are glowing red with a powdery grey surface before you start cooking, as this means that they're hot enough
- frozen meat is properly thawed before you cook it
- you turn the meat regularly and move it around the barbecue to cook it evenly

Remember that meat is safe to eat only when:

- it is piping hot in the centre
- there is no pink meat visible
- any juices are clear
- food made from minced meat, such as sausages and burgers, must be cooked thoroughly all the way through.
- Check by cutting the meat at the thickest part and ensure none of it is pink on the inside.

When you are storing and preparing food for cooking on a barbecue.

- always wash your hands after touching raw meat
- use separate utensils (plates, tongs, containers) for cooked and raw meat
- never put cooked food on a plate or surface that has had raw meat on it
- keep raw meat in a sealed container away from foods that are ready to eat, such as salads and buns
- don't put raw meat next to cooked or partly cooked meat on the barbecue
- don't put sauce or marinade on cooked food if it has already been used with raw meat
- Don't leave food out of the fridge for more than a couple of hours, and don't leave food in the sun.
- Always keep the following food cool
 - salads
 - dips
 - milk, cream, yoghurt
 - desserts and cream cakes
 - sandwiches
 - ham and other cooked meats
 - cooked rice, including rice salads

Managing Fire

- Make sure that your barbecue pit
- Keep a bucket of water, a bucket of sand or a garden hose nearby in case of emergencies
- Make sure your barbecue site is flat and well away from sheds, fences, trees and shrubs
- Use only enough charcoal to cover the base of the barbecue to a depth of about 50mm (two inches)
- Keep children, garden games and pets well away from the cooking area
- Never leave the barbecue unattended
- When you've finished cooking, make sure the flame is extinguished by pouring water over it before disposal.
- Never put ashes straight into a dustbin or wheelie bin. If they're hot, they can melt the plastic and cause a fire

Adapted from

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Summerhealth/Pages/Barbecuefoodsafety.aspx>