

Food Safety

Food safety isn't just for kitchens and cafeterias—it applies to picnics, BBQs, offices, and residences. Following a few key practices helps prevent foodborne illness and keeps everyone healthy.

Guessing Isn't Safe - Use a Thermometer!



Minimum Internal Cooking Temperatures			
Poultry (chicken/turkey)	74°C / 165°F	Ground Meats	71°C / 160°F
Whole cuts of beef, pork, fish	63°C / 145°F	Leftovers and reheated food	74°C / 165°F
Hot foods should stay above	60°C / 140°F		
Cold foods should stay below	4°C / 40°F		

Refrigerator Temperature

Refrigerator temperature should be 4°C / 40°F or colder

- Don't overload fridges—air needs to circulate.
- Clean spills promptly to prevent cross-contamination.
- Store raw meat below ready-to-eat foods.
- Freezers should be -18°C / 0°F.



Thawing Meat Safely

Never thaw meat on the counter! Safe methods for thawing meat include:

- In the refrigerator (best method).
- In cold running water (sealed package, change water every 30 min).
- In the microwave (cook immediately afterward).
- Meat should only be refrozen if it was thawed in the fridge and still safe.

Fresh Vegetables & Produce Contamination

Vegetables can carry harmful bacteria—even if they look clean

- Wash hands before handling produce.
- Rinse vegetables under running drinking-quality water (no soap).
- Use clean cutting boards and knives.
- Keep produce separate from raw meat.
- Pre-cut or bagged produce must be refrigerated and used promptly.
- Leafy greens and sprouts are especially vulnerable to contamination.
- Centres for Disease Control and Prevention recommends washing all fresh produce thoroughly; even prewashed lettuce.



Picnics and Outdoor Events

Outdoor dining increases food safety risks due to temperature and handling

- Keep **cold** foods **cold**: use coolers with plenty of ice or ice packs.
- Keep **hot** foods **hot**: serve within 2 hours (or 1 hour if above 30°C / 86°F).
- Never leave perishable food sitting out.
- Use separate utensils and plates for raw and cooked foods.
- Wash or sanitize hands before food handling—bring wipes or sanitizer if no sink is available.
- *When in doubt, throw it out.*



Egg Storage & Safety

Eggs are a common source of foodborne illness if handled improperly

- Store eggs in the refrigerator, not on the counter.
- Keep eggs in their original carton to protect them and retain the best before dates.
- Use eggs before the best before date and discard cracked or dirty eggs.
- Cook eggs until whites and yolks are firm—or use pasteurized eggs for recipes with raw or lightly cooked eggs.



BBQ Grill Safety

Cleaning grills keeps food safe; it is how you clean them that really matters

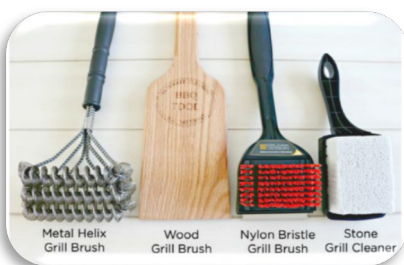
Always clean grills before and after use, and preheat to burn off residue

DO NOT use metal wire grill brushes; metal bristles can break off and stick to the grill. They can transfer to food and be accidentally swallowed, causing serious internal injuries.



Safe alternatives for grill cleaning

- Grill stones or pumice bricks
- Nylon or coil brushes
- Aluminum foil held with tongs
- Wooden scrapers



Handwashing In and Away from the Kitchen

Handwashing is one of the most important things you can do when preparing food to avoid contamination

- Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Clean and sanitize surfaces regularly.
- Avoid preparing food if you are sick.
- Pay attention to *best before* dates.
- When hosting events, always plan for proper food temperature control and food handling.

Additional Resources:

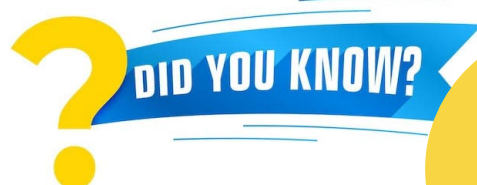
[Food safety and you - Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-nutrition/food-safety/food-safety-and-you.html)

[Safe food storage - Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-nutrition/food-safety/safe-food-storage.html)

[Safe cooking temperatures - Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-nutrition/food-safety/safe-cooking-temperatures.html)

[Food safety tips for leftovers - Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-nutrition/food-safety/food-safety-tips-for-leftovers.html)

[Food safety tips for leafy green vegetables - Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-nutrition/food-safety/food-safety-tips-for-leafy-green-vegetables.html)



**Over 4 million
Canadians get
food
poisoning
every year!**