

Bank holiday barbecue checklist

It is estimated that the UK reports 1,000,000 cases of food poisoning each year, with a rise in summer months, which is a potential consequence of unsafe barbecue food. So, it is important to be aware of the dangers of foodborne diseases from bacteria, such as Campylobacter, listeria and salmonella.

Stuart Armstrong, Acting Head of Food Policy at the Food Standards Agency, said:

'Most of us know the danger of not cooking chicken all the way through, and people need to have the same vigilance when it comes to burgers and sausages. A common misconception is that burgers are like steak and can be eaten rare, but when they are still pink in the middle, they are three times more likely to contain harmful bacteria.

'And also, anyone who is planning a barbecue needs to make sure food isn't left out and that fridges should be kept below 5°C.'

So what should you do to avoid risk of food poisoning

With 28% of people concerned about food poisoning, here are 5 easy tips for staying safe when cooking on the barbie:

1. Come clean

Wash your hands thoroughly before cooking and eating. Wash your utensils and serving dishes in between use, taking special care not to mix up dishes used for holding raw food with dishes for cooked food.

2. Keep your cool

Defrost your food in the fridge, NOT at room temperature, and ensure it is fully defrosted before cooking. When storing cooked food, cool it at room temperature before putting it in the fridge, but make sure you get it in the fridge within 2 hours.

3. Feel the heat

Cook food at the right temperature and for the correct length of time to ensure that any harmful bacteria are killed. Turn meat regularly and move it around the barbecue to cook it evenly.

4. Marinade mindfully

When applying a marinade to meat, be careful. Don't baste partially and cooked meat with a marinade that has been used on raw meat, as this can lead to cross-contamination. If you would like to apply the marinade again as a baste – boil it in a pan, and it will be safe to use.

5. Check it's done

Always check that meat juices run clear and that no pink meat is visible when cutting through the thickest part. Remember, charred on the outside doesn't always mean cooked on the inside!

Find out more information on our [barbecue advice](#).