



live well, work well

August 2011

Transform Your Summer Cookout

Warm weather means outdoor get-togethers and cookouts, but it can be tough to eat nutritiously surrounded by hot dogs, potato salad and pie. Use these tips to incorporate health and safety into your summer parties.

Safety First

With all-day events, it can be easy to neglect simple hygienic food practices.

- Never let food sit out for more than two hours (one if over 90 degrees F outside). Set a timer to remind you.
- Always wash your hands and all dishes used for food preparation.
- Preheat the grill at least 20 minutes in advance to get rid of bacteria from your last barbecue.
- Keep mayonnaise-based foods and fresh fruit cool – put some ice in a second bowl underneath.

Enjoy Your Favorites

Watching what you eat doesn't mean you have to sacrifice your favorite cookout menu. Try these tips to add nutrition to traditional summer foods.

- Choose turkey or veggie burgers and turkey dogs with a whole wheat bun to enjoy these classics without ruining your diet. Top with ketchup, mustard, lettuce and tomato – skip the mayo and cheese.

- Make potato salad healthier by leaving the potato skins on and substituting nonfat yogurt for half the mayo. This swap also works for coleslaw.
- Replace potato chips with pretzels or a fruit and veggie platter.
- Experiment with new grill items, such as lamb and veggie kabobs (*see recipe*), fish, chicken breast, and various vegetables and fruits.
- Keep dessert sweet but add nutrition by serving a fruit salad. Or freeze 100 percent fruit juice to make frozen juice pops.
- Offer a cooler of water and sliced lemons for a refreshing, calorie-free drink option.

Don't forget to plan fun activities to get the group moving, such as ring toss, kickball or playing catch.



Cellphone Scare?

A World Health Organization panel has classified cellphones as “possibly carcinogenic,” based on a review of several studies examining a potential link between cellphone use and increased cancer risk. Heated debate surrounds this announcement. Keep in mind that cellphones are considered only “possibly” carcinogenic – there is no definitive evidence linking the two.

If this risk concerns you, there are easy precautions to take. Use your phone on speakerphone and/or use an earpiece to keep the phone away from your head. It is wise to invest in an earpiece anyway, for safe hands-free talking while driving.

DID YOU KNOW

The implications of this finding are unclear. Some experts argue that cellphone radiation must be taken seriously by the public, the telecom industry and the government. Others stress this be kept in perspective – after all, cellphones now share a risk category with items such as pickled vegetables and coffee.



'Tis the Season ... To Get Active!

You know that regular physical activity is important for you (and your family's) health, but it can be difficult to get motivated. Take advantage of the summer weather and find fun, affordable ways to get active while enjoying the outdoors.

- Find a park or trail near you and explore. Take the whole family for a scenic hike or bike ride. Or, take a walk or ride around the neighborhood.
- When possible, get in the habit of walking or biking to nearby places such as stores, parks or restaurants.
- Cool off on a hot day and hit the local pool or beach. Not only is swimming fun and low-impact, it's also great for your cardiovascular health, strength and flexibility. This activity is ideal for people of all ages, as well as those

with a disability or recovering from an injury.

- Join a local softball, volleyball or other sports league – and encourage family members and kids to do the same.
- Take your kids to a local playground and join in their fun!



Do You Really Need the ER?



Have you ever been to the emergency room (ER) for a sore throat or sprained ankle? Though it is tempting to seek immediate care for an illness or injury, you could save a lot of money by choosing your facility more wisely.

A trip to the ER is far more expensive than a visit to your primary doctor or urgent care – and yet, a study by the Commonwealth Fund found that 21 percent of ER visits are avoidable. Steering clear of unnecessary ER visits can save you hundreds of dollars each time you are sick or injured.

Do visit the ER when immediate attention is required, such as trouble breathing, chest pain, heart attack, stroke, broken bones, severe burns or bleeding, shock, poisoning or seizures.

For conditions such as ear infections, vomiting, fever less than 102 degrees F, sprains and strains, upper respiratory infections and headaches, opt for an urgent care facility or your primary doctor instead. In addition to saving money, these options can mean less waiting – a patient with a nonemergency in the ER may wait an hour or more to be seen.

Lamb & Veggie Kabobs

- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- ½ cup chicken broth
- ¼ cup red wine
- 1 lemon (juice only)
- 1 tsp. garlic, chopped
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. rosemary
- 1/8 tsp. black pepper
- 2 lb. lean lamb, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 24 each: cherry tomatoes, mushrooms, small onions

Combine oil, broth, wine, lemon juice, garlic, salt, rosemary and pepper. Pour over lamb and vegetables. Marinate in refrigerator several hours or overnight. Put together skewers of lamb, onion, mushrooms and tomatoes. Grill on medium heat 10-13 minutes (turning once), or until desired doneness is reached. Makes 8 kabobs; 274 calories each. *Source:* www.health.gov

