

## ***Summertime Food Safety!***

By

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July is National Picnic Month! Foodborne illness, also known as food poisoning, increases in the summer months. There are two reasons for this. First, bacteria grow faster in the warm, humid temperatures of summer, and can quickly grow to large numbers on food that can make someone eating the food sick. Second, many people cook outdoors in the summer at picnics and barbecues and the food safety controls available at home in the kitchen are not usually available. Although foodborne illnesses can increase in warm weather, you can protect yourself and your family by following these four simple steps to safer food in the summertime.

**Clean: Wash Hands and Surfaces Often.** When eating away from home, find out if there is a source of safe drinking water. If not, bring water for preparation and cleaning, or pack clean, wet, disposable washcloths or moist towelettes and paper towels for cleaning hands and surfaces.

**Separate: Don't Cross Contaminate.** When packing the cooler for a picnic, wrap raw meat securely to prevent raw meat juices from coming into contact with ready to eat food.

**Cook: Cook to Proper Temperatures.** Cook meat and poultry completely at the picnic site. Partial cooking ahead of time allows bacteria to survive and multiply to the point that additional cooking cannot destroy them.

**Chill: Refrigerate Promptly.** Cold refrigerated food that may spoil, like luncheon meats, cooked meats, chicken, and potato or pasta salad, should be kept in an insulated cooler packed with several inches of ice, ice packs, or containers of frozen water. Keep the cooler in shade or shelter, out of the sun whenever possible.

**Leftovers: When in Doubt, Throw it Out!** Food left out of refrigeration for more than two hours may not be safe to eat. When outside temperatures are above 90 degrees F, food should not be left out over one hour. Play it safe! Put leftovers that may spoil back on ice once you finish eating so that they do not spoil or become unsafe to eat.

## **Any Day Is A Picnic Chicken Salad**

Serving Size: 1/6 of recipe

Yield: 6 servings

### **Ingredients:**

2 ½ cups cooked, diced chicken breast

½ cup chopped celery

¼ cup chopped onion

2 Tablespoons pickle relish

½ cup light mayonnaise

### **Instructions:**

1. Combine all ingredients.
2. Refrigerate until ready to serve.
3. Use within 1ô 2 days. Chicken salad does not freeze well.

### **How to use:**

1. Make chicken salad sandwiches.
2. Make a pasta salad by mixing with 2 cups cooked pasta.
3. Kids will love this salad served in a tomato or a cucumber boat.

**Nutrition Facts:** Serving Size 1/6 of recipe; calories 160; total fat 8 g; total carbohydrate 4 g; protein 17 g; sugars 2 g. (Source: USDA Food Safety & University of Wisconsin CES)