



### Prevention Tips for Your Summer Picnic or Party

Summertime is a perfect time for gathering friend and family outdoors for picnics or parties. Here is a checklist of things you should consider, to prevent illness or injury from summertime culprits.

**Food** – Did you know that bacteria multiply more quickly when food heats up in summer temperatures?

- ☐ **Chill out.** Keep cold foods at 40 degrees or below. Packing frozen items helps maintain colder temperatures.
- ☐ **Fill your cooler!** Did you know that a full cooler maintains its temperature longer than a partially filled one?
- ☐ **Sitting is bad.** Don't let food (hot or cold) sit out for over two hours (or one hour if it's more than 90 degrees).
- ☐ **Use multiples.** Keep perishables in one cooler together and drinks in another so as people open/close to get drinks, they aren't letting all the cool out of the one with the perishables.
- ☐ **Location. Location. Location.** Put your cooler in the shade when you get to your destination.
- ☐ **Don't mix.** Pack food items so there isn't leakage from one thing to the next (e.g., meat juice dripping on the grapes). And after cooking, don't use the same dishes/utensils on done meat that you used on the raw meat.
- ☐ **Don't go part way.** If you're cooking in advance, cook things all the way through so that bacteria are destroyed (i.e., don't par cook).
- ☐ **Clean = Good.** Clean your food (e.g., fruits and veggies) before packing them, making sure they are in clean containers/bags. Also, when preparing and before you eat, make sure your hands are clean.
- ☐ **Soak it up.** If marinating food, do it in the refrigerator. Also, do not re-use marinade. If you want some for sauce for cooked foods, reserve some unused marinade beforehand.

**Fire/Fireworks** – Take advantage of your local professional fireworks displays and avoid doing fireworks at home. If you do decide to do them at home, or when grilling or using fire pits or torches, take precautions.

- ☐ **Kids and fireworks don't mix.** Don't let kids light the fireworks and keep them from launch area.
- ☐ **Once and done.** With fireworks, never try to re-light "duds."
- ☐ **Be ready to douse it.** Keep a bucket of water or a hose nearby when using fireworks or with fire pits.
- ☐ **Location counts.** Place torches away from overhangs, umbrellas, etc. and be sure they have stable footing.
- ☐ **Keep an eye out.** As you would with pools/lakes, make sure children are being supervised at all times around any fire/fireworks. Designate a responsible adult, and use a system (person holding the ball/match box/any item is the one responsible for keeping watch).
- ☐ **Don't be scared of the dark.** Since it's likely to be dark/get dark while your fire pit is going, be sure to be conscious of kids who are NOT near the flames and in the darker parts of the yard, party area

**Bugs** – The peskiest (and often very dangerous) summertime bugs include fleas (can spread plague), mosquitoes (West Nile virus and forms of encephalitis) and ticks (spread Lyme Disease).

- ☐ **Repel me.** Use insect and tick repellent and apply it properly—don't skimp! Use 20 percent DEET to repel ticks and mosquitoes more effectively.
- ☐ **Stay out.** Ticks tend to be in areas with leaf litter and tall grasses so avoid these areas or be particularly careful to check for ticks after being in these types of areas
- ☐ **Timing matters.** Mosquitoes are most prevalent from dusk to dawn – be especially diligent about using repellent during these times
- ☐ **Know and watch.** Know the signs of possible infection and react quickly to prevent further deterioration. Signs to watch for: fever, rash, body aches, neck stiffness.

Visit [Allstate Be Aware and Prepare](#) and the [Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety](#) for more, helpful information.