



spotlight on health

Don't Let Food-Borne Illness Spoil Outdoor Cookouts

(NAPSA)—Although Americans are eager to spend time outside barbecuing and picnicking with family and friends, heat and humidity speed up the spoilage of foods and the proliferation of harmful bacteria such as E.coli and Salmonella—which can often lead to food poisoning.

More than 250 known diseases are transmitted through food, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 76 million people get sick, more than 300,000 are hospitalized, and 5,000 Americans die each year from food-borne illness.

Proper food handling techniques and hygiene habits can help to significantly reduce the chances of being hit by food poisoning. The CDC has observed a 23 percent overall drop in bacterial food-borne illnesses since 1996, thanks in part to food safety educational programs and the adoption of better hygiene habits.

Here are some useful tips to help you keep food-borne illnesses at bay:

- **Start with your hands:** To avoid the spread of germs, wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before and after handling and preparing foods.

- **Heat things up:** Use an instant-read thermometer to check if food is thoroughly cooked. According to the CDC, cook roasts and steaks to at least 145°F. Whole poultry should be cooked to 180°F for doneness. Cook ground meat, where bacteria can spread during grinding, to at least 160°F. Also make sure to insert the thermometer in the thickest parts of the meat and in several places to ensure that it is cooked throughout.

- **Wipe away the germs:** Use a disinfectant such as LYSOL® Antibacterial Kitchen Cleaner to prevent cross-contamination in



Grilling can be even more thrilling when you practice proper food handling techniques.

the kitchen and around the grill area. Cross-contamination is the accidental spread of germs from food to surfaces, like cutting boards and counters, or to other foods that are not cooked, like salads, vegetables and breads.

- **Keep meats and vegetables separate:** To avoid cross-contamination, when the juices from raw chicken or meats are left on a cutting board or plate, use separate ones for vegetables and fruits.

- **Don't forget to rinse:** Bacteria that cause food poisoning aren't just limited to meat products. Before enjoying the summer's bounty of cantaloupes, peaches, and tomatoes, and more, thoroughly wash all produce. This includes fruits and veggies with rinds you don't eat.

- **Keep cold foods cold and hot food hot:** Chill and refrigerate leftovers immediately and make sure that hot foods remain hot.

For additional information on how to avoid food-borne illness, call for a free copy of the *Summer Safety—Put Your Family First on the Road to a Safe and Healthy Summer* brochure at 1-800-99-LYSOL.