

# MILLS COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

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**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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## Summer Food Safety

*Simple precautions can reduce risk of food-borne illness*

Warm weather means more outdoor activities, including picnics and cookouts. Every year, Iowa sees an increase in food-borne diseases when summer starts, and often after summer holiday weekends. Mills County Public Health (MCPH) reminds Mills County residents that a few simple precautions can reduce the risk of food-borne illness.

“Basically, preventing food-borne illness comes down to four simple rules: cooking food thoroughly, keeping cold food cold, hot food hot, and keeping your hands clean,” said Agency Administrator, Sheri Bowen. Always remember to:

- Cook meat thoroughly. Use a meat thermometer to measure the internal temperature of meat and poultry. Cook hamburger, pork and beef to 160 degrees F and poultry to 165 degrees F. If a thermometer is not available, cook meat (especially ground meats) until no pink remains and all juices run clear.
- Wash your hands with soap and water before preparing food. Don’t prepare food for others if you have diarrhea.
- Avoid cross-contamination by always washing hands, utensils and cutting boards immediately after they’ve been in contact with raw meat or poultry, and before they touch other food. Use one platter for cooked meat and another for raw meat.
- Keep meat refrigerated when marinating. Do not use the sauce you used to marinate raw meat or poultry on cooked food.
- Clean your grill between each use.
- Refrigerate or freeze leftovers promptly. Don’t keep foods that need refrigeration on a serving or picnic table longer than two hours (or one hour if the temperature is above 90 degrees F).
- Pack your cooler with 75 percent food and 25 percent ice or cold packs. A cooler that is packed full stays colder longer.

For more information, including recommended cooking temperatures for other meats and seafood, visit [www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov). or contact MCPH by phone at 712-527-9699.