



# Picskin Party Tips

This time of year is popular for football fans everywhere to gather around the television and enjoy some of their favorite foods. Whether you're watching the playoffs, bowl games, or the big game, here are a few food handling "fouls" to avoid so that you and your friends aren't penalized after the game.

## Offensive Holding Temperatures – 15 yard penalty

This mistake is the most common cause of foodborne illness outbreaks. Not holding foods at safe temperatures allows bacteria to grow and reproduce to dangerous numbers in food. Examples of food you want to make sure to temperature control include raw or cooked meats like hamburgers and hot dogs, dairy products like cheese and some chip dips, and any cooked starch or vegetable such as a baked potato.

- ⊙ Make sure to keep your cold foods cold by keeping them at 41°F or below.
- ⊙ Make sure to keep your hot foods hot by keeping them at 135°F or above.

## Illegal Hands to the Food – 5 yard penalty

Disease causing germs are easily transferred from one surface to another by unwashed hands, including on your food. Proper handwashing keeps your hands free of harmful pathogens so that you don't make yourself sick or spread bacteria to those around you. Make sure to wash your hands before handling food any time you have:

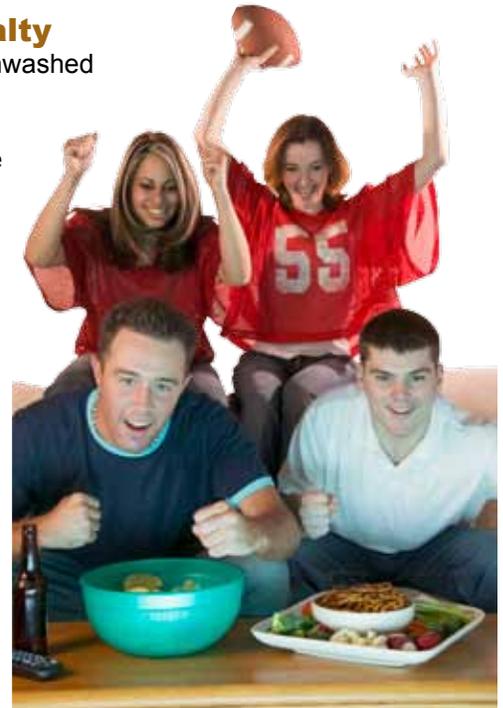
- ⊙ Used the restroom
- ⊙ Touched raw meats like beef or chicken
- ⊙ Sneezed or coughed
- ⊙ Touched your hair or face
- ⊙ Touched any other unsanitary surface

When washing your hands, rub them vigorously together using soap and warm water for 10 to 15 seconds, and then dry them with a clean towel or paper towel.

## Personal Foul: Cross Contamination – 15 yard penalty

Always make sure that you keep raw meats separated from other foods. The juices from raw meats contain harmful bacteria that may cause a foodborne illness if they come into contact with other foods. Some ways to keep raw meats from contaminating your other foods include:

- ⊙ Using separate plates for your raw and your cooked meats.
- ⊙ Use separate utensils to handle your raw meats and your other foods.
- ⊙ Make sure that any surface that contacted raw meats or their juices is sufficiently cleaned and sanitized before coming into contact with any other foods.
- ⊙ Never store other foods below your raw meat in the refrigerator. Raw meat juices may drip down onto the foods below and contaminate them.



## Incomplete Cooking – 10 yard penalty

Proper cooking of raw meats is necessary in order to kill any illness causing bacteria that may be in the food. Bacteria such as Salmonella, E. coli, and Campylobacter are commonly occurring bacteria in raw meats and are only killed with sufficient cooking temperatures. To keep from getting sacked by these bacteria, cook your meats to the following minimum temperatures for at least 15 seconds:

- ⊙ Eggs, fish, and single pieces of meat such as beef, veal, lamb and pork - 145°F
- ⊙ Ground meats such as hamburger and sausage - 155°F
- ⊙ Chicken, turkey, and stuffed foods such as stuffed fish, meat, and poultry - 165°F

Make sure you have an accurate probe thermometer handy to take internal temperatures of the meats.



With the right playbook, you don't have to pass on your favorite foods this football season. If you take care to block out bacteria and don't drop the ball on food safety, and you will score a touchdown with your fans every time.