

# Wellness Works

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Summer 2010

## Planning a Cookout? Make Sure to Put Safety on the Menu

Safety is an important consideration when you're literally playing with fire. The Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association ([hpba.org](http://hpba.org)) features recipes and grilling safety advice for summer cookouts.

### Remember these grilling safety tips:

- Keep a fire extinguisher nearby.
- If using a gas grill, check hoses for wear and leaks before each use.
- If using a charcoal grill, never use gasoline, kerosene or highly volatile fluids as a starter. Flames can flare up in your face.
- Make sure electric grills are connected to a ground fault interrupter outlet.
- Put your grill in an open area, away from buildings.
- Never leave the grill unattended.
- Avoid clothing with hanging shirttails or flowing sleeves.
- Use long-handled utensils to avoid burns.
- Trim away excess fat to help prevent flare-ups.

Source: Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association

## We're Not Watering This Down

Getting the right amount of your daily H<sub>2</sub>O is important for your health. After all, water is your body's main component and makes up about 60 percent of your weight. How much do you need? The Institute of Medicine advises that men consume roughly 13 cups of total beverages a day, and women need about nine cups a day. It's OK to consume other healthy beverages and foods that contain water to help you get your daily requirement. So, go ahead and drink up. You'll find that water is the clear choice for keeping you hydrated and healthy.

Source: Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research

## Food Safety: Start Off Right

To help keep food-borne illness from being an unwelcome guest at your cookout, buy foods that can spoil last when shopping. Refrigerate them as soon as possible – within one hour when temperatures are above 90 degrees.



### Other food safety tips:

- Completely thaw meat in the refrigerator before grilling, so it cooks evenly.
- Don't use the same platter for raw and cooked meats and poultry.
- Refrigerate leftovers right away. Toss food left out more than two hours. Throw away after one hour if temperatures climb above 90 degrees.
- Marinate food in the refrigerator. Set aside some marinade to use on cooked food, so it doesn't mingle with raw meat.

Source: United States Department of Agriculture



BlueCross BlueShield  
of Illinois



## The Importance of Using Sunscreen

Red alert! If you regularly soak up the sun's rays without proper protection, you could be setting yourself up for serious skin damage or even skin cancer.



### Keep these tips in mind:

- Always use a sunscreen with SPF15 or higher.
- Choose broad spectrum products that guard against the sun's UVA and UVB rays.
- Use at least one ounce to cover your arms, legs, neck and face.
- Protect your lips by using sunscreen lip balm.

Share your commitment to skin protection this summer by e-mailing the "Sun. Play. Fun." greeting card to your friends and loved ones. The card's message includes advice to tan less, wear a hat and use sunscreen. Check out this and other free, animated greeting cards on the website *eCards for Health*<sup>SM</sup> at [ecardsforhealth.com](http://ecardsforhealth.com).

Source: American Cancer Society

## Snappy Snack Suggestions

Did you know that snacks can fit into a healthy diet? Fruit is a great snack choice – eating fruit gives you a sense of fullness without adding a lot of calories.

### Try these calorie-conscious options:

- One cup of strawberries (44 calories)
- One cup of cantaloupe (60 calories)
- A medium-sized apple (72 calories)
- A large orange (86 calories)
- One cup of grapes (100 calories)
- A medium-sized banana (105 calories)

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



## Learn Your Numbers to Keep Healthy Odds in Your Favor

Do you know your numbers? It's important to know your cholesterol and triglyceride (or fat) levels, blood pressure readings and more. Talk to your doctor about preventive screenings, and have a follow-up discussion once you have the results.

### Make prevention your intention. Use these goals as a starting point:

- Waist measurement: less than 35 inches for women and less than 40 inches for men
- Blood glucose (blood sugar) before eating: less than 100 mg/dL
- Body mass index (BMI): less than 25 kg/m<sup>2</sup>
- Blood pressure: less than 120/80 mmHg
- HDL (good) cholesterol: 60 mg/dL or higher
- LDL (bad) cholesterol: less than 100 mg/dL
- Total cholesterol: less than 200 mg/dL
- Triglycerides: less than 150 mg/dL



Source: American Heart Association

## Energize Your Savings

Studies show that the average U.S. family spends more than \$1,600 a year on home utility bills. And a lot of that energy use is wasted.

### Try these tips to power down and save up:

- Install a programmable thermostat and set a comfortably low temperature for winter and one that is comfortably high for summer.
- Take quick showers instead of baths.
- Set your dishwasher to air dry.
- Shut down your computer and monitor when you're not using them.



Source: U.S. Department of Energy