Summer 2017

Wellness Works

Heating up the grill? Keep safety first!

Before any outdoor cooking starts, make sure you know the facts about fire safety.

- Grills pose fire dangers and are sources of carbon monoxide.
- Always use grills away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.
- All grills should only be used outdoors.
- Keep your grill clean of grease or fat buildup.
- Never leave your grill unattended.

Propane grills:

- Check hoses for any signs of damage and replace if needed.
- Make sure there are no sharp bends in the hose or tubing.
- Check for gas leaks. Open the valve that carries the gas. Put a soapy solution at the connection point. If bubbles appear, you have a leak. If making the connection tighter doesn’t help, close the valve and have the grill repaired.
- If you smell gas while cooking, get away from the grill and call the fire department.

Charcoal grills:

- Use only charcoal starter fluid.
- Never add flammable liquids to the fire.
- If you use an electric charcoal starter, be sure to use an outdoor extension cord.
- Let the coals cool before throwing away in a metal container.

Food safety matters whether inside or out

Whether you’re cooking in your kitchen or on the grill, safe food handling can mean the difference between a healthy meal and a doctor’s visit.

- Never marinate food outside. Always marinate in the refrigerator.
- If you want to use some of the marinade as a sauce, set some unused sauce aside for that. Don’t use sauce that was used to marinate the raw food.
- Cook food completely. Use a food thermometer to be sure meat and poultry has reached a safe internal temperature.
- Keep hot food hot by moving it to the side of the grill until you’re ready to serve.
- Have ice chests on hand to keep cold food cold until you’re ready to eat.
- Use a clean plate when taking food off the grill. Reusing the same plate that held the raw meat could contaminate the cooked food.
- When you’re finished eating, refrigerate leftovers right away.

Whether it’s a summer cook-out or a picnic in the park, keeping safety in mind is key.


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Accidental drowning can be avoided

One of the leading causes of death for young children is preventable. Drowning accounts for the most injury deaths of children ages one to four. Swimming pools are the main place where young children drown, followed by bathtubs. Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

• Never leave young children alone near any water.
• Keep a young child within arm’s reach in a bathtub.
• After using a bucket, always drain it and store away from young children.
• Keep bathroom doors closed or place locks on toilet seat covers in case a young child wanders into the bathroom.
• Learn CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation). It can save a life.
• Give your children life jackets when they are near or in water, such as lakes or the ocean. Don’t use toys as a substitute.
• Don’t drink alcohol before or during swimming, boating or water skiing, or while watching children.
• If you don’t know how to swim, learn.
• Never swim alone.

Swimming pools can be great backyard fun. To help keep children safe, make sure that you have a four-foot, four-sided fence with self-closing and self-latching gates. Pool fences should separate the house and play area from the pool.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Practicing water safety starts at home

Focus on the hands

• Wear gloves. Even a small cut can turn into a problem when exposed to soil and garden chemicals. Gloves also protect you from insects, snakes, poison ivy and sharp objects.
• Try not to repeat motions for a long time. Vary your gardening tasks every 15 minutes with a rest between tasks.
• Choose hand tools that fit you. Don’t buy tools with molded handles that don’t fit your hand.

Safety tips

• Buy tools with safety locks.
• Store garden tools and harmful chemicals in a safe place out of children’s reach. Also store flower bulbs away from children. Small bulbs could pose a choking hazard, and some bulbs are poisonous.
• Read all instructions before using chemicals or equipment. Check equipment before use and clean often.
• Do research before planting so you know if plants can be harmful to people or pets.
• Never wipe your face with your hands while gardening. Even if you do so with gloves on, you could spread germs or end up with poison ivy on your face.
• Wash your hands well after gardening.
• Don’t forget back safety. Lift with your legs, not your back. And use a wheelbarrow for moving heavy pots or other items.

Gardening is a great way to be active, enjoy the outdoors and even grow your own healthy food. You can burn 150 calories during 30-45 minutes of gardening, and it can be a great stress reliever.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; American Society for Surgery of the Hand; Consumer Reports