



Ensuring Food Safety While Celebrating This Summer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Kannapolis, N.C. – Cabarrus Health Alliance, May 23, 2025 – As the summer season kicks off, Cabarrus Health Alliance (CHA) is reminding residents that safe food practices are key to enjoying the warm-weather months. Whether it's backyard barbecues, family picnics, or community cookouts, summer gatherings bring people together—and also create more opportunities for foodborne illnesses if proper safety precautions aren't followed.

Proper hand hygiene and keeping all foods at safe temperatures in the heat are vital to preventing foodborne illnesses. CHA encourages everyone to prioritize these practices to safeguard their health and enjoy their summer gatherings.

Hand Hygiene: One of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of harmful bacteria is through proper hand hygiene. Always wash your hands with soap and water for **at least 20** seconds before and after handling food.

Managing Food Temperature: Maintaining safe food temperatures is critical during the summer. Cold foods should be kept at or below 41°F, and hot foods should be kept at or above 135°F. Use coolers with ice packs to keep perishable items cold and insulated containers to keep hot foods warm. Avoid leaving food out in the sun for extended periods.

Cross Contamination: Prevent cross contamination by using separate cutting boards, utensils, and plates for raw and cooked foods. Always cook meats to the recommended internal temperatures and refrigerate leftovers promptly.

Jennifer Hatley, Environmental Health Director, emphasized, "As we embrace the joys of summer, it's important to remember that food safety should be a top priority. By practicing proper hand hygiene and maintaining safe food temperatures, we can prevent foodborne illnesses and enjoy a safe, healthy summer season."



For more information on food safety tips, please visit www.cdc.gov/food-safety.

About Cabarrus Health Alliance: Cabarrus Health Alliance is the public health authority of Cabarrus County. Cabarrus Health Alliance is an autonomous organization providing services and programs to meet public health needs. Cabarrus Health Alliance is a leader in public health and is nationally recognized for its innovation.

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Our mission is to improve individual and community health through services, education, and collaborative action.

Compassion | Adaptability | Integrity | Collaboration