



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Tom Schlueter (630) 444-3098

(630) 417-9729 cell

www.kanehealth.com

A football fan's guide to 'Super' food safety

As millions of Americans mark Super Bowl Sunday with friends and family, the Kane County Health Department is offering some practical food safety guidelines to help prevent foodborne illnesses.

Personal Foul

In food safety, this penalty occurs when the health of your guests is placed in jeopardy because you fail to follow one or more of USDA's basic food safety messages. The following tips will help keep friends and family safe from foodborne illness:

- Clean - Wash hands and surfaces often.
- Separate - Don't cross-contaminate. Keep raw meat and poultry apart from cooked foods.
- Cook - Use a food thermometer to be sure meat and poultry are safely cooked.
- Chill - Refrigerate or freeze promptly.

Illegal Use of Hands

In food safety, this occurs when Super Bowl party goers do not wash their hands before preparing or eating food. Unclean hands are one of the biggest culprits for spreading bacteria. Washing hands in warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds will reduce the risk of foodborne illness.

False Start

A false start in food safety occurs when partially and undercooked food is served. The result in this respect may be a few days of stomach cramps and diarrhea but it could also lead to

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hospitalization and possibly even death. Remember that color is **NOT** a reliable indicator, and use a meat thermometer to verify that the food has been cooked thoroughly. Cook steaks to at least 145°F, ground beef to 160°F and all poultry to 165°F. Do not let food sit out for more than 2 hours without being maintained below 41°F or above 135°F.

Intentional Grounding

In food safety, intentional grounding occurs when a guest at your Super Bowl party eats undercooked burgers or perishable food left out in the "Danger Zone" during the Pre-Game show and misses the entire second half of the game. *E. coli* O157:H7 is a potentially deadly bacterium that can cause bloody diarrhea and dehydration. Other symptoms of foodborne illness from *E. coli* and other types of bacteria are high fever, severe headache, neck stiffness and nausea. The very young, older adults and persons with weak immune systems are the most susceptible to foodborne illness. Ensuring food is safely cooked by using a food thermometer is your best defense against foodborne bacteria.

Off Sides

In food safety, this occurs when you cut raw veggies on the same cutting board that was used to cut up chicken and other raw meats. The juices from the raw meat can contain harmful bacteria that cross contaminates other foods. Consider using one cutting board for raw meat and poultry and one cutting board for veggies. If you use only one cutting board, wash it with hot soapy water after preparing each food item.

Official Review

In football, referees often use the instant replay to ensure they made the right call. You can also be sure that you are making the right call when it comes to food safety. One of the best resources to call is USDA's Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854). Recorded messages are available 24 hours a day. You can also find answers to your questions about food safety by using "Ask Karen," USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service's virtual representative. "Ask Karen" is a feature that allows you to ask food safety related questions 24 hours day, at www.askkaren.gov

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