Healthy Grilling

- **Why grill my food?**
  Grilling is a great way to cook your food. It adds a smoky flavor to foods. Grilling doesn’t have to be just for the warm summer months. It can be enjoyed year round by using a grill pan over a stove or George Foreman grill.

- **Can grilling food cause cancer?**
  Cooking meat at very high temperatures (called charring or blackening) may increase your risk for consuming cancer-causing chemicals also known as carcinogens. However, cooking meat properly and practicing safe cooking techniques significantly reduces this risk. Vegetables do not carry a risk of forming carcinogens when cooked or charred on the grill.

- **How do I safely grill?**
  1. **Marinate your meat:** Studies have found that marinating your meat helps reduce cancer-causing chemicals from forming. It also adds flavor. (Simple marinade recipes for salmon and veggies can be found on the back of this handout.)
  2. **Incorporate spices:** Adding spices into your burger may help reduce harmful compounds from forming when cooked at high temperatures. Try the Moroccan slider recipe on the back of this handout.
  3. **Trim the fat:** Cutting excess fat from meat before grilling will decrease the amount of fat that drops off the meat, causing the flame to flare up and blacken food. Your best bet is to select lean cuts of meat for the grill so that no extra trimming is required. Lean cuts of meat include lean ground beef, ground turkey, salmon and tuna steaks, chicken breasts and beef, pork, or lamb round cuts. Visit www.beefitswhatsfordinner.com to download a free chart listing the 29 leanest cuts of beef.
  4. **Keep your grill clean:** Keeping your grill clean will not only produce the best flavor but it also decreases the buildup of cancer-causing chemicals. It is recommended to use a grill brush and clean your grill before and after each use.
  5. **Start low and go slow:** Grilling meat for a longer period of time over a lower flame will reduce the amount of charring. Flipping meat often will also keep meat from burning.
  6. **Cook thoroughly:** While you don’t want to char your meat, you still need to cook it to a safe temperature to kill any possible food-borne bacteria like E-coli. Safe temperatures include:
      - 145°F - beef, pork or lamb steaks and chops
      - 145°F - fish
      - 160°F - ground beef
      - 165°F - poultry
  
  Keep your meat thermometer on hand to ensure meat is cooked to the proper temperature. Insert into the thickest part of the meat for the most accurate reading.
Quick and simple marinades for healthy grilling!

Garlic Marinade for Veggie Kabobs

**Ingredients:**
- 2/3 cup olive oil
- 1/3 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1/4 cup minced onion
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

**Directions:** Have an assortment of your favorite grilling veggies ready including bell peppers, onions, eggplant, zucchini, mushrooms and cherry tomatoes. Combine all marinade ingredients together in a small bowl and mix well. Marinade cut vegetables for 3 to 4 hours and then grill or brush marinade onto vegetables as you grill. Cook skewers on grill until vegetables are lightly charred all over, about 10 minutes, basting with reserved marinade and turning occasionally. *Source: www.food.com*

Moroccan Sliders

**Ingredients:**
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon allspice
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 lb. of ground beef, turkey, or bison

**Directions:** Mix spices together. Blend one tablespoon of mixture with one pound of ground beef, turkey or bison. Form into small mini-burgers and grill 3-4 minutes per side. The spices help block the formation of harmful chemicals when meat is grilled. Store the remaining spice-mixture in an airtight container. Recipe will make about two Tablespoons. *Source: Nutrition Diva’s Secrets for a Healthy Diet by Monica Reinagel.*

Easy Salmon with Marinade

**Ingredients:**
- 4 salmon filets or 4 salmon steaks
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 3 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 scallions
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 2 tsp fresh ginger, peeled and finely chopped

**Directions:** Mix oil, soy sauce, scallions, garlic, and ginger to make a marinade, pour over salmon and marinate for 1 hour in the refrigerator. (*Be sure you don’t leave it for more than an hour or the salt in the soy will begin to cook the meat.*) Grill salmon for about 4 minutes on each side. *Source: www.food.com*

Sources: [www.fightbac.org](http://www.fightbac.org); [www.foodnetwork.com](http://www.foodnetwork.com); [www.beefitswhatsfordinner.com/grilling.aspx](http://www.beefitswhatsfordinner.com/grilling.aspx)