

Time to Grill!

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Summer is almost here! Hopefully the weather will start being more agreeable and we will have more opportunities to move our cooking outside! There are a few things to remember prior to firing up that grill for the first time:

~ **Clean your grill** – this may seem like an obvious statement, but you certainly do not want to be eating any extra burnt char (it is NOT healthy for you). Check your grill brush to ensure it is in good shape. You can also use grill sheets and/or foil on your grill to reduce the production of HCAs and PAHs – cancer causing chemicals.

~ **Marinate for 15** – to help reduce the production of HCAs and PAHs caused from grilling at high temperatures, marinate your chicken, fish, pork, or steak in an acidic medium (citrus juice, vinegar).

~ **Cook your meat to USDA recommended temperatures** – use an instant-read thermometer, or a digital/dial one to check the temperature of your cut pieces of pork, chicken, fish, and steak. It is also important to use a food thermometer when cooking/frying/grilling ground beef and turkey. You want to check the temperature in the thickest part of the cut meat, or from the side into the middle of a hamburger/turkey patty. Remember your meat will increase in temperature by at least 5 degrees after pulling it off the grill when covered in foil. Use the following USDA guidelines:

~All Poultry = 165°F

~ Ground Meat (Beef, Veal, Pork, Lamb) = 160°F

~ Fish = 145°F

~ Steaks, Chops & Roasts (Beef, Veal, Pork, Lamb) = 145°F + 3-minute rest time

~ **Tips for grilling veggies:**

~ Cut veggies in slices so they are large enough not to fall into the grill but thin or small enough to cook quickly without burning.

~ It is easier to grill veggies on foil or in a grill-safe pan, so they do not stick to the grill or pick up odd flavors and residue on the grill. This also keeps the grill cleaner. If putting the vegetables directly on the grill brush a light coat of canola/vegetable oil directly onto the grill.

~ Use a spray or brush to keep the oil a very light coat on the veggies. This ensures they are not drenched and that they stay low in calories.

~ Top the veggies with your favorite dry seasoning mix, garlic, cumin, red pepper flakes, salt (in moderation), pepper, and fresh herbs.