



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

Local HSHS hospitals offer safety tips regarding food handling, preparation and storage during summer months

BREESE, HIGHLAND & GREENVILLE — Preventing a food-borne illness can be a bit more challenging during the summer months when temperatures rise and more people enjoy outdoor picnics, barbeques and camping.

Kayla Barnes, RD, LD, clinical dietitian at HSHS St. Joseph's Hospitals in Breese and Highland and HSHS Holy Family Hospital in Greenville, says bacteria grow faster in warmer months because hot and humid conditions cause it to multiply. Bacteria can potentially double in as little as 20 minutes.

“The key to a healthy and happy summer gathering is keeping food temperature and time in mind. And when in doubt, throw it out.”

St. Joseph's Hospitals in Breese and Highland and Holy Family Hospital recommend the following food safety practices:

- Do not use the same utensils, cutting board and dishes for raw food and cooked food.
- Thaw and marinate food in the refrigerator – not on the counter.
- Discard marinades and sauces that have touched raw meat.
- Wash fruits and vegetables before peeling or cutting to prevent germs on the food's peeling from spreading to the inside.
- Use a meat thermometer to ensure foods are cooked thoroughly.
 - 145° F for fish, steaks and roasts
 - 160° F for ground beef, pork and lamb
 - 165° F for chicken and turkey
- Discard food left unrefrigerated for more than two hours. When it's above 90° F, reduce this time to one hour.
- Wash your hands often when preparing, handling and storing food.

- Keep hot food hot and cold food cold. If using a cooler, put raw foods on the bottom with ice packed on top.
- Allow food to cool to room temperature before storing it in the refrigerator.
- Store leftovers in smaller containers rather than one large container so it cools faster.

Food-borne illnesses affect 48 million people each year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Symptoms of a food-borne illness can include upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, fever and nausea.

The emergency rooms at St. Joseph's Hospital in Breese and Highland and Holy Family Hospital are open 24/7 to provide expert care when you need it most.

More information about food-borne illnesses and safe food handling practices can be found on the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov) website and at [FoodSafety.gov](https://www.foodsafety.gov).

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About Hospital Sisters Health System

Hospital Sisters Health System's (HSHS) mission is to reveal and embody Christ's healing love for all people through our high-quality Franciscan health care ministry. HSHS provides state-of-the-art health care to our patients and is dedicated to serving all people, especially the most vulnerable, at each of our physician practices and 15 local hospitals in two states – Illinois (Breese, Decatur, Effingham, Greenville, Highland, Litchfield, O'Fallon, Shelbyville and Springfield) and Wisconsin (Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire, Oconto Falls, Sheboygan and two in Green Bay). HSHS is sponsored by Hospital Sisters Ministries, and [Hospital Sisters of St. Francis](https://www.hospital-sisters.org) is the founding institute. For more information about HSHS, visit www.hshs.org. For more information about Hospital Sisters of St. Francis, visit www.hospital-sisters.org.