

Ground Meat Basics

Food Safety Tips for Ground Meat

1. When shopping, pick up meat and other perishables last.
2. Check the date on the package and make sure the packaging is clean and free from holes or tears.
3. If the weather is very hot, bring along a cooler with ice to transport perishables home. Make grocery store your last stop before home.
4. Store meat in coldest part of the refrigerator on the lowest shelf. Place packages on plate or tray to prevent drippings from getting on other food.
5. Use meat within 1-2 days or freeze by overwrapping with freezer packaging and place in freezer.
6. Thaw all meat, but especially ground meat safely in refrigerator. If thawing in microwave, finish cooking immediately.
7. Wash hands thoroughly with warm soapy water before and immediately after handling raw meat.
8. Cook ground meat thoroughly. Check that meatloaf and burgers cook to 160°F with a meat thermometer. With browned ground beef, cook until no pink remains.
9. Avoid cross contamination by washing any utensils, plates, cutting boards, etc. that touches raw meat in hot soapy water before using it for cooked meat or food that will be served uncooked.
10. Handle leftovers carefully. Do not wait for them to cool, but instead refrigerate immediately. Reheat leftovers to at least 140°F or until hot and bubbly throughout.

Ground meat needs special handling:

- The number one cause of foodborne illness in the U.S. is mishandling of food in the home. Foodborne illness is often mistaken for the flu.
- Protein foods are more likely to cause foodborne illness. Beef, pork, poultry, fish and eggs are highly perishable. When these foods are not treated carefully, bacteria can survive, multiply and possibly form a toxin which makes people sick.
- Ground meat deserves special attention because it is handled more than whole cuts of meat. Plus, meat from many different animals may be mixed together increasing the risk of bacteria growth.
- Carefully follow the Food Safety Tips on the other side of the page to prevent illness.



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Ground Meat Recipes

Sodium-Saving Sloppy Joes

1 pound lean ground beef or turkey
1 medium onion chopped
1/4 teaspoon chili powder
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/4 teaspoon powdered garlic or 1 clove garlic, minced
1 cup no-salt added ketchup*
1/4 cup water
4 to 6 hamburger buns

In large skillet, brown ground meat and onion over medium heat 8 to 10 minutes or until meat is no longer pink, breaking into 3/4-inch bits. Remove to bowl lined with paper towel. Drain any drippings in skillet and wipe skillet with paper towel. Return meat mixture to skillet and stir in ketchup or ketchup substitute ingredients and water. Cover and heat about 20 minutes on medium low heat, stirring occasionally. Add more water if mixture becomes too thick. Spoon onto buns and serve.

Makes 4 to 6 servings. Nutrition information per serving based on 4 servings made with beef: 438 calories, 28g protein, 34g carbohydrate, 21g fat, 265mg sodium. If made with turkey, 370 Calories, 28g protein, 34g carbohydrate, 14g fat, 340mg sodium.

*In place of no-salt added ketchup: mix 8-ounce can no-salt added tomato sauce plus 1 tablespoon cider vinegar plus 1 tablespoon brown sugar.

Coney Island Taters

1 pound lean ground beef or turkey
1 medium onion chopped
1 cup prepared barbeque sauce
2 large potatoes
1/2 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
1/4 cup sliced green onions (optional)

In large skillet, brown ground meat and onion over medium heat 8 to 10 minutes or until meat is no longer pink, breaking into 3/4-inch bits. Remove to bowl lined with paper towel. Drain any drippings in skillet and wipe skillet with paper towel. Return meat mixture to skillet and stir in barbeque sauce; cover and simmer over medium-low heat 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, pierce potatoes in several places with fork. Place on paper towel in microwave oven. Microwave on HIGH 10 to 11 minutes or until tender, rearranging potatoes halfway.

Cut potatoes lengthwise into quarters. Cut each quarter crosswise in half. Arrange 4 pieces potato on each serving plate; top with meat mixture. Sprinkle with cheese; top with green onions if desired.

Makes 4 servings. Nutrition information per beef serving: 393 calories, 27g protein, 22g carbohydrate, 21g fat, 593mg sodium. If made with turkey, 328 calories, 27g protein, 15g fat 573mg sodium.