Don’t Let Spoiled Food Spoil Your Fun

There is nothing like summer to coax us out of our stuffy kitchens and into the great outdoors. Whether we are cooking burgers on a backyard grill or packing a picnic basket for a trip to the park, we just seem to enjoy the combination of food and being outdoors. We have to take some precautions, however, to keep that combination from becoming hazardous for us.

Keep cold foods cold until they are served. If you are away from home, pack ready to serve foods in one cooler that is packed with plenty of ice and/or freezer packs. Use a different cooler to pack uncooked meat so that it doesn’t contaminate the prepared foods. Make sure that the coolers are filled completely (add extra ice or freezer packs if you run out of food). This will help keep the food colder longer.

Once you begin cooking meat and poultry, cook it until it is done. Do not partially cook it and plan to finish it later. This allows bacteria to grow in the food. Grill poultry until there is no pink and the juices run clear. Cook hamburger until there is no pink (because hamburger is ground meat, there is more surface area to harbor bacteria).

Remember the two-hour rule and put food away as soon as you have eaten. If you have purchased take out food, that time is reduced to one hour.

Contrary to popular beliefs, mayonnaise is usually not the culprit in food-related illness. Foods that are more high risk include meat, poultry, eggs, seafood, and dairy products.

Make sure there is a source for clean water or carry water with you so that you can adequately clean hands, utensils, and surfaces before, during, and after the meal.

Lastly, hold this thought:

When in doubt, throw it out.

For more information, call 1-888-674-6854.

Thanks to all those who have served or who are serving so that we can be free to enjoy this Fourth of July.

Respectfully,

Student Support Services
Keep Your Cool in the Heat

Avoiding extreme heat and staying cool is important in the hot summer months. It is not only important for you to stay cool, but it is also helpful to keep your house cool as well. Discover some traditional and innovative ways to beat the heat this summer.

The tried and true method of staying cool is drinking plenty of water. Water keeps your body hydrated. When you are in the hot sun, you tend to sweat more and lose a lot of the water that your body needs to survive and function properly. So, water consumption is critical to staying cool and healthy in the heat.

Although it may seem like an oxymoron, eating spicy foods can stimulate heat receptors in your mouth and enhance circulation in your body which cools your body down. Another new idea to keep your body temperature cool is to switch out your daily moisturizer for cooling aloe vera gel. You will receive soothing, moisturizing, and cooling effects from the use of this product that is derived from the aloe vera plant.

Keeping cool while you sleep is also a major concern during the summer months. One way of doing this is to get rid of your duvet or heavy blanket and sleep under your sheets instead. For an extra cooling sensation, you can put your sheets in a plastic bag and refrigerate them for a few hours before going to bed. You can also buy a “chillow”. A “chillow” is a device you place inside your pillow case that is activated when you are ready to go to sleep. It creates a low-cost cooling alternative that is also environmentally friendly.

With the rise in energy costs, many people struggle to keep their house cool in the dead heat of summer. However, there are some easy things everyone can do to attempt to remedy this problem. Keeping curtains drawn and ceiling fans going can help to minimize the amount of heat that is absorbed into your house; this results in keeping the air cooler through circulation and in less use of central air conditioning.

Staying cool in the summer is not always the easiest thing to do for anyone. However, making small changes can have a major impact on your health, your rest, and your energy bill.

Helping Nervous Pets Stay Calm

The Fourth of July is a time of celebration for most of us, and often that celebration includes fireworks. For pets that are nervous or timid, however, being exposed to fireworks is anything but a celebration.

One way to help your pet deal with the stress of loud fireworks is to teach it to associate the noise with something positive. To do this, play a brief snippet of a recording of fireworks at a low volume. Hold your pet and reward him or her with a treat for staying calm. Gradually, increase the volume and duration of the recording.

Another helpful strategy might be to wrap your pet in a vest made to reduce thunderstorm anxiety. Since the noise of fireworks and of thunder are very similar, these vests might help your pet remain calm.

If these strategies do not help your pet feel calm and safe, then bring the pet inside where it can be protected from the noise and chaos. Just as some people will never enjoy noisy activities, some pets will also feel better avoiding them.

In the long run, it is better for you to enjoy the festivities without your pet rather than subject them to something traumatic and potentially harmful to them and others.
Be Safe at the Lake

When you go on a vacation, having fun is always a top priority. Being safe should rank at the top along with having fun.

Water is highly reflective and amplifies the force of the sun, so sun protection is absolutely necessary. Use a good sunscreen that is designed for use in the water. The SPF should be a 15 or higher, and the product should be re-applied at least every two hours. Other necessary protection includes lightweight clothing, a wide-brimmed hat, and sunglasses. In addition, stay well hydrated and try to stay out of the sun when the sun is at its highest point (midday).

If you’re at the lake, you probably want to swim. Make sure that you and your family know how to swim and understand basic water safety rules. Wearing an approved safety jacket will protect you from accidents if you should fall out of a boat, off of a water ski, etc. Never swim alone, and avoid areas where the water is murky or filled with underwater plant life. Never dive into unfamiliar water as there may be large rocks, trees, or other debris that can injure or kill you.

Be responsible in operating boats or other watercraft. Speeding, showboating, and operating them too close to swimmers and other boaters can be dangerous. Know the local laws and respect yourself and others. The idea is for everyone to have fun.

Lastly, do not mix alcohol with swimming or the operation of watercraft. Alcohol shuts down regions of the brain that are responsible for making judgment calls, and it slows down your reaction time. You may feel as though you are perfectly in control until it is too late.

Alcohol will also speed up dehydration, so drink plenty of water to compensate for it.

Don’t forget to mark your calendars and break in your shoes for the annual 5K and 1 mile Fun Run on Saturday, October 6. Proceeds provide scholarships to students in the Nursing, PTA, and EMS programs and also funds an emergency reserve for students in these programs. It’s not too late to prepare yourself for it.

5K Training Schedule for Beginners

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CT = Cross Train
Student Support Services houses a variety of services designed to enhance the performance and well-being of students at Oklahoma City Community College.

- Services to Students with Disabilities, including providing accommodations for documented disabilities, interpreting and captioning services for deaf and hard of hearing students, and assistive technology.
- Professional counseling by licensed providers.
- Learning support specialists to assist with academic needs such as learning styles, study skills, test-taking, and general health and wellness issues.
- TRIO Grant Programs (Upward Bound and Trio Student Support Services) designed to help first generation college students learn more about college before they arrive and how to be more successful once they are here.

For more information about our services and how to access them, please visit our website at http://www.occc.edu/support/ or call us at 682-7520. We are located on the first floor of the Main Building near SEM Entry 3.

Peanut Apple Crunch Balls

1/3 cup chunky peanut butter
1/4 cup 68 percent vegetable oil spread
2 tablespoons honey
1 cup rice and wheat cereal flakes, crushed slightly
1 cup bran flakes, crushed slightly
1/3 cup finely snipped dried apples
2 tablespoons finely chopped peanuts
1/8 teaspoon apple pie spice
2 ounces white baking chocolate (with cocoa butter), chopped
1/4 teaspoon shortening

In a medium saucepan, combine peanut butter, vegetable oil spread, and honey. Cook over low heat just until melted and nearly smooth, whisking constantly. Stir in cereals, apples, peanuts, and apple pie spice until well mixed. Divide mixture into 18 portions. Using slightly wet hands, shape mixture into balls. Let stand on a waxed lined baking sheet about 15 minutes, or until firm.

In a small saucepan, combine white chocolate and shortening; cook and stir over low heat until melted. Drizzle balls with melted white chocolate. Let stand about 15 minutes or until white chocolate is set (if necessary, chill balls until white chocolate is firm). Makes 18 servings.

Per Serving:
- 90 calories
- 6 grams fat
- 1 milligram cholesterol
- 76 milligrams sodium
- 9 grams carbohydrate
- 1 gram fiber
- 2 grams protein