



live well, work well

May 2013

Brought to you by: Cross Employee Benefits

Grilling the Safe Way

Grilling is a common activity in the spring and summer months—in addition to avoiding heating up your house with your stove or oven, grilling is often a good way to get family and friends together for some outdoor fun. With this activity, however, there are dangers. Grill safety is important and should not be overlooked.

Follow these tips to keep your grilling experience from taking a wrong turn.

- Always read your grill's instructions prior to use.
- Never use your grill indoors, and keep it at least 10 feet away from any building or home when in use.
- Make sure the grill is off or the coals are cold when you are finished. Never leave a hot grill unattended.
- If you have a gas grill:
 - Check its tubes for blockage regularly, and clear blockage out prior to use.
 - Make sure hoses are not cracking or brittle, and

- that there are no holes, leaks or sharp bends in them.
- Replace scratched or nicked connectors to avoid gas leakage.
- Keep gas hoses as far away from hot surfaces and hot grease as possible.
- Regularly check for gas leaks, per the grill's instruction manual.

Take extra safety precautions when grilling to ensure a fun, accident-free experience.



National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month

May is National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month. From dust mites to molds to cockroaches and other household pests, many things can trigger allergies. And with spring in full swing, seasonal asthma and allergies are on their way, too. If you suspect that you are allergic to something, your doctor can perform some simple tests to pinpoint the allergy, and suggest ways to reduce your exposure. If you have a severe allergy, make sure friends, family and co-workers know and are aware of what to do in case of a serious reaction.

DID YOU KNOW

Asthma and allergies are often overlooked, but in reality, they affect one in five (60 million) Americans.



Healthier Alternatives to Common Unhealthy Foods

Think you can't live without certain indulgent treats and snacks? Think again. Check out these common foods, and their healthier alternatives:

- **Ice cream:** sorbet, sherbet, frozen yogurt
- **Donuts, sweet rolls, muffins or pastries:** English muffins, bagels or scones
- **Chips:** popcorn (air- or microwave-popped) or baked or kettle chips
- **Mayonnaise on sandwiches:** avocado
- **Bacon:** turkey bacon
- **Protein or candy bars:** almonds or peanuts
- **Creamy salad dressings:** olive oil- or vinegar-based dressings

- **Hamburgers:** turkey burgers, bean burgers, veggie burgers
- **Potatoes:** sweet potatoes



Affordable Décor Refresh

From cleaning out closets to getting the yard ready for summer, spring is a time of change. If you've been itching to redecorate your home, but putting it off because you can't afford it, check out these simple ways to save money and give your décor a lift.

Skip the interior decorator. There are many free and inexpensive ways to get ideas and learn how to take on home improvement projects. Use the Internet and magazines to get an idea of what appeals to you. You'll save money, and will likely end up with a style that complements your personality.

Determine what you want to spend. If you go into a redecorating project with an idea of what you're willing to spend, you will be less likely to blow your budget on one item. Tell yourself you can spend a certain amount of money on each item or room, and stick to it.

Take advantage of what you already have. Realize that you can repurpose things and give them new appeal with a little do-it-yourself creativity. That wooden crate collecting dust in the corner, filled with your adult daughter's old toys doesn't necessarily have to go. Sand it, paint it and turn it on its side to serve as a rustic end table.

Don't think big-name stores are the only option. From thrift shops to craft fairs to garage sales, there are many ways to get exactly what you want without overspending. While shopping takes time and patience, you are likely to find what you want at a lower price than if you bought from a big-name store.

Grilled Vegetable Kabobs

When you fire up the grill this spring, meat isn't the only option—grilled vegetables are delicious and good for you, too. Try this recipe for grilled vegetable kabobs and start your spring the healthy way.

- 2 medium zucchini
- 2 medium yellow squash
- 2 red or green bell peppers, seeded
- 2 medium red onions
- 16 cherry tomatoes
- 8 oz. fresh mushrooms
- 2 medium ears sweet corn
- Nonstick vegetable oil spray
- ½ c. balsamic vinegar
- 2 tbsp. mustard
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ tsp. thyme

Rinse all the vegetables. Cut zucchini, squash and bell peppers into 2-inch chunks. Cut red onions into wedges. Combine the cut vegetables with the tomatoes and mushrooms in a bowl. Cut the corn into 1-inch pieces and cook in boiling water for about 10 minutes. Add cooked corn to other vegetables. Mix the vinegar, mustard, garlic and thyme for the sauce. Toss vegetables in the sauce and thread vegetables onto skewers. Before starting the grill, spray it with vegetable oil spray. Place the skewers on the grill over medium heat. Baste occasionally with extra sauce. Grill 20 minutes, or until tender.

