

FOOD SAFETY WHILE HIKING

Sometimes you just have to get out and walk around in the solitude and beauty of nature. You may want to hike for just a few hours, or you may want to hike for a few days. One meal and some snacks are all that's needed for a short hike. Planning meals for a longer hike requires more thought. You have to choose foods that are light enough to carry in a backpack and that can be transported safely.

Keeping Cold Foods Cold

The first principle is to keep highly perishable foods at the proper temperature; therefore it is best to transport chilled foods. For example:

- Refrigerate or freeze the food overnight. For a cold source, bring frozen gel-packs or freeze some box drinks. The drinks will thaw as you hike and keep your meal cold at the same time.
- For a day hike, just about anything will do as long as you can fit it in your backpack and keep it cold – sandwiches, fried chicken, bread and cheese, and even salads – or choose non-perishable foods that may be held at room temperature.



Bring Lightweight Shelf-Stable Food Items

If you are backpacking for more than a day, the food situation gets a little more complicated. You can still bring cold foods for the first day, but you'll have to pack shelf-stable items for the next day. Canned goods are safe, but heavy, so plan your menu carefully and take only the amount you'll need. Advances in food technology have produced relatively lightweight staples that don't need refrigeration or careful packaging. For example:

- Peanut butter in plastic jars;
- Concentrated juice boxes;
- Canned tuna, ham, chicken, and beef;
- Dried noodles and soups;
- Beef jerky and other dried meats;
- Dehydrated foods;
- Dried fruits and nuts; and
- Powdered milk and fruit drinks.



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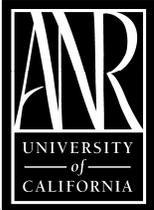
Safe Drinking Water

- Bring bottled or tap water for drinking and always start out with a full water bottle.
- Replenish your supply from tested public systems when possible.
- It is not a good idea to depend on fresh water from a lake or stream for drinking, no matter how clean it appears. Some pathogens thrive in remote mountain lakes or streams and there is no way to know what might have fallen into the water upstream.
- If it becomes necessary to use water from streams, lakes, and springs, purify the water, with purification tablets and water filters, no matter how clean it appears. The purification tablets – which contain iodine, halazone, or chlorine – kill most waterborne bacteria, viruses, and some (but not all) parasites.
- Some parasites – such as *Cryptosporidium parvum*, *Giardia lamblia*, and larger bacteria – are not killed by purification tablets; you must also use a water filter. These water filtering devices must be 1 micron absolute or smaller. Water purification tablets, filters, and sanitizing tablets can be purchased at camping supply stores.



Washing and Cleanup

- It is important to keep everything clean, so remember to bring disposable wipes to clean your hands and utensils.
- Camping supply stores sell biodegradable camping soap in liquid and solid forms. But use it sparingly, and keep it out of rivers, lakes, streams, and springs, as it will pollute.
- Dump dirty water on dry ground, well away from fresh water.
- Pack garbage bags to dispose of any other trash, and carry it out with you to discard in a proper receptacle.

<p>W:\Data\FORMSARCHIVE\EHD\MATHER MOVE ADDRESS CHANGE\HANDOUTS\Food Safety While</p>  <p>Hiking 12 24 08.doc</p>	<p>This information is provided in partnership with Sacramento County Cooperative Extension.</p> <p><small>The University of California prohibits discrimination or harassment of any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, pregnancy (including childbirth, and medical conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth), physical or mental disability, medical condition (cancer-related or genetic characteristics), ancestry, marital status, age, sexual orientation, citizenship, or status as a covered veteran (covered veterans are special disabled veterans, recently separated veterans, Vietnam era veterans, or any other veterans who served on active duty during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized) in any of its programs or activities. University policy is intended to be consistent with the provisions of applicable State and Federal laws. Inquiries regarding the University's nondiscrimination policies may be directed to the Affirmative Action/Staff Personnel Services Director, University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources, 300 Lakeside Drive, 6th Floor, Oakland, CA 94612-3550, (510) 987-0096.</small></p> <p><small>Sacramento County Board of Supervisors – Roger Dickinson, 1st District; Illa Collin, 2nd District; Susan Peters, 3rd District; Roberta MacGlashan, 4th District; and Don Nottoli, 5th District. Also Terry Schutten, County Executive; Jim Hunt, Acting Countywide Services Agency; and Gloria J. Barrett, Director, Cooperative Extension</small></p>	
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