

*newsletter*

... JUNE 2012 ...

## QUICK TAKES

### Food and Water Recommendations for Travelers



- Your summer getaway is almost here. This year, you've sworn you're not going to let an unexpected health issue spoil even a day of your vacation. Your healthy travel kit has been assembled. It includes basic first-aid supplies, plus your prescription and over-the-counter medicines. You've stocked up on sunscreen and bug spray. You're nearly ready.
- If your vacation plans include wilderness camping or a destination where the drinking water may not be safe, you still have some preparation to do before taking off.
- This newsletter offers common-sense advice for ways to ensure clean drinking water while vacationing along with general rules for food safety.

## Water Precautions for the Backcountry

On day hikes, safe drinking water usually isn't an issue. You can carry what you need. But longer, overnight adventures are another story. When planning a camping trip, it is important to anticipate your water needs. There are many approaches you can take to providing yourself and others in your group with safe water for drinking.

While the water flowing in the streams and rivers of the backcountry may look pure, it can still contain bacteria, viruses, parasites and other contaminants.

Wildlife, pack animals and messy humans all have the potential to contaminate water sources. Do not drink untreated water from lakes, rivers, springs, ponds, streams or shallow wells. Note -- if a wild animal drinks from a water source, that does **not** mean that the water is safe for you to drink.



### What are the best ways to treat water to make it safe for drinking?

**Boiling** is the best method for making water safe to drink. Water should be brought to a rolling boil for one minute. At altitudes higher than 6,500 feet (roughly 2,000 meters), you should boil water for three minutes.

**Filtration** devices will remove most microorganisms, including the common parasites that cause cryptosporidiosis (aka "crypto") or giardiasis. Use a filter that has been tested and rated by National Safety Foundation (NSF) Standard 53 or NSF Standard 58 for cyst and oocyst reduction. Filtered water will need additional treatment to kill bacteria and viruses.

**Disinfection**, usually with iodine or chlorine tablets, will kill or inactivate most bacteria and viruses. Follow the manufacturer's directions. Very cold water will need a longer treatment time. Supplies to treat water can be purchased at camping and sporting-goods stores.

### Water Precautions While Abroad

Do not use or drink poorly treated water or use ice when traveling in countries where the water supply might be unsafe. If the safety of drinking water is in doubt, do one of the following:

- Drink bottled water.
- Disinfect water by boiling or other methods.

# Food Safety When Camping

The same food safety precautions apply when you're picnicking and camping as when you're at home.

- Pack all foods safely. Use a cooler if car-camping or boating. Pack foods in the frozen state with a cold source if hiking or backpacking.
- Keep raw foods separate from other foods.
- Never bring meat or poultry products without a cold source to keep them safe.
- Bring disposable wipes or biodegradable soap for hand- and dishwashing.
- Plan on carrying bottled water for drinking. Otherwise, boil water or use water purification tablets.
- If using a cooler, leftover food is safe only if the cooler still has ice in it. Otherwise, discard leftover food.
- Whether in the wild or on the high seas, protect yourself and your family by washing your hands before and after handling food.



## Preventing Traveler's Diarrhea

If your summer travel will take you to parts of the world that do not have a safe water supply, you'll want to take precautions to minimize the risk of TD -- traveler's diarrhea. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends following these preventive measures:

- Avoid eating foods or drinking beverages purchased from street vendors or other food vendors where unhygienic conditions are present.
- Avoid eating raw or undercooked meat and seafood.
- If you know that the prepared food has been sitting out unrefrigerated, avoid it.
- Avoid eating raw fruits (e.g., mangos, oranges, avocados) and vegetables unless you, the traveler, peel them.

If handled properly, well-cooked and packaged foods usually are safe. Tap water, ice, unpasteurized milk and dairy products are associated with increased risk for TD. Safe beverages include bottled carbonated beverages, hot tea or coffee, beer, wine and water (boiled or appropriately treated with iodine or chlorine).

## Backcountry Lentil Salad Serves 4

A steady diet of franks and beans while camping gets tiresome fast. With a little advance preparation, you can bring gourmet cooking to your backcountry cookouts. Lock-tight bags of protein-packed lentils fit easily into your backpack, and they cook quickly. Sun-dried tomatoes are readily available at supermarkets. The herb seasoning blend can be mixed at home and packed into plastic bag; remember to label which recipe it's for.

Backyard diners will enjoy this recipe, as well. Add chopped fresh tomatoes instead of dried, along with fresh mint leaves and crumbled feta for a burst of fresh flavor.

### Ingredients

1 tablespoon dried mint  
1 teaspoon ground cumin  
1/2 teaspoon ground coriander  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper  
1/4 teaspoon granulated garlic  
1 1/2 cups (10 oz) green lentils, picked over  
4 cups (1 liter) water  
1/2 cup (75 g) dried tomatoes, cut into thin strips  
2 lemons  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 medium onion, diced  
4 romaine lettuce leaves, optional

### Preparation

1. Combine dried mint, cumin, coriander, salt, pepper and garlic. Set the herb mix aside.

2. In a large saucepan, combine lentils and water. Bring to a boil and simmer until lentils are tender, about 20 minutes. Remove from heat, stir in dried tomatoes and set aside to cool.

3. Squeeze lemon juice into a serving bowl. Add olive oil and the herb mix. Add onions and let sit a few minutes to soften the onions slightly. Add the cooked lentils and stir to blend. If desired, spoon salad onto lettuce leaves to serve.

### Nutritional info

*Per serving*  
210 Calories  
4 g Fat  
1 g Saturated fat  
13 g Protein  
31 g Carbohydrate  
11 g Fiber  
294 mg Sodium

**Source:**  
Healthy Living Kitchens

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