

How to Enjoy a Stay at Home Backyard Picnic

By Lauren Panoff, MPH, RD

Warmer weather is just around the corner, and many of us are starting to think about ways to socialize outdoors – at a safe distance of, course. With that in mind, below are some suggestions for ways to have a fun and enjoyable spring picnic that everyone can enjoy.

Pack wipes and hand sanitizer.

Keeping minds at ease is a big part of making a picnic fun and comfortable for everyone. It's important to have sanitizing products available. Anything that may be touched by multiple people should be wiped down before and after the picnic.

Bring your own dinnerware.

Since these items shouldn't be shared right now, it may be easiest for everyone to bring their own. This may also mean that it's an entirely "bring your own" picnic, meaning that everyone is responsible for providing their own meal and beverage. If adequate precautions are taken, using gloves and wipes, it might be appropriate for one person to pour a beverage into disposable cups and allow everyone to grab their own. Or, someone could provide funny and colorful packaged paper plates.

Have fun with your food.

Picnics are an opportunity to mix and match favorite foods, and social distancing shouldn't affect what's on your spread. Nutritious, fresh cut fruits and vegetables are always a hit, are easily portable, and pair well with dips. Salads are another great choice, whether it's a three-bean, crisp leafy green, or nut and grain salad. Finger sandwiches can be fun, using hummus, lean meats or plant-based proteins, and layers of colorful veggies. Light and airy desserts, like angel food cake and berries, chia seed pudding, or frozen yogurt can be the perfect satisfying end.

Sit at a safe distance apart.

Social distancing rules include putting six feet between one another. This is to minimize the risk of sharing germs by way of coughs and sneezes. One way to do this is to have everyone bring their own blanket, and situate yourselves at appropriate, yet still conversational, distances on the grass.

Bring a speaker.

Even while additional rules apply for picnics right now, they can still be a fun way to come together with your loved ones. Bring a speaker to play music, a podcast, or favorite radio show while you enjoy delicious food, take in the outdoors, and catch up.

For more information, reach out to your local in-store ShopRite dietitian at shoprite.com/welleveryday.