

New labeling offers more protection for meat lovers

May 27 2016



(HealthDay)—When you head to the grocery store to select your steaks

for grilling this Memorial Day weekend, you might notice a new safety label on the package.

This month, the U.S. Department of Agriculture issued a new rule stating that mechanically tenderized beef must now be labeled as such and include safe cooking instructions for consumers.

The tenderizing process involves piercing certain cuts of beef with needles or small blades to break up tissue and increase tenderness. But those blades can push germs to the interior of the meat, making proper and thorough cooking crucial.

Mechanically tenderized beef looks the same as beef that has not been treated this way, so labeling is needed to alert consumers about this increased food safety risk, according to the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service.

The new labeling rule took effect May 17.

"These products, like all whole cuts of beef, should be cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 145 degrees Fahrenheit as measured with a food thermometer before removing meat from the heat source," the USDA said in an agency news release.

"For safety and quality, allow meat to rest for at least three minutes after it has been removed from the heat source before carving or consuming. During this rest time, the internal temperature is either constant or slightly rises to destroy pathogens," the agency added.

Since 2000, there have been six reports in the United States of food illness outbreaks linked to mechanically tenderized beef prepared in consumers' homes and restaurants, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Undercooking the products was a major contributing factor in all those cases, the CDC said.

According to the USDA, "home cooks, restaurants and other [food](#) service facilities will now have more information about the products they are buying, as well as useful cooking instructions so they know how to safely prepare them."

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [food safety](#).

Copyright © 2016 [HealthDay](#). All rights reserved.

Citation: New labeling offers more protection for meat lovers (2016, May 27) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-05-meat-lovers.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--