### Mayo Clinic Minute

**Grilling burgers vs steaks**

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<th>Video</th>
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<td>The sounds and smell of summer. You may be surprised to know that what’s good for the steak, is not good for the burger.</td>
<td>“There are important differences between steaks and hamburger.”</td>
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**Nipune Rajapakse, M.D.**  
**Pediatric infectious diseases**  
**Mayo Clinic**

Mayo Clinic’s Dr. Nipunie Rajapakse says your burger needs to be cooked to well-done, that’s to at least 160-degrees.

**Nipune Rajapakse, M.D.**  

“Hamburger, obviously, is made up of ground meat and so any bacteria that was present on the surface of the cut of meat before it was ground can be introduced into the center of the hamburger patty.”

But she says it’s different with steak.

**Nipune Rajapakse, M.D.**  

“If a steak is contaminated with a bacteria, it would usually be on the surface of the steak and so heating the surface of the steak to a high temperature is usually enough to kill off any bacteria that may be there.”

Dr. Rajapakse says the bacteria of greatest concern- Escherichia coli, or E. coli - can cause foodborne illness resulting in abdominal pain, nausea and diarrhea. And, she says, some types of E.coli can even lead to kidney failure or death.

**Nipune Rajapakse, M.D.**  

“That’s why we say it’s relatively safe to eat your steak undercooked, but hamburger meat should really be cooked through to the middle.”

For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I’m Ian Roth