

FBI* CASE:

Perils at the Picnic

Calling all agents! The FBI Team has learned of a possible foodborne illness incident in progress!

As an FBI detective, you must investigate the facts and give your expert conclusions. Because now that you're an expert on food safety — it's up to you to Fight BAC! for food safety!

*FBI = foodborne illness

It was a Saturday morning in early summer . . .

1

Tom gets a call from his friends to meet them in the park down the street to play ball. They tell him to bring food for a picnic lunch, so they can stay all day. (One of his buddies, Nick, is bringing his older brother along to help with the barbecue.) The boys can't wait to get to the park early so they can start playing before it gets too hot!

2

Tom looks in the refrigerator and finds some potato salad his mom made during the week. He also finds some cold cuts, leftover turkey, cheese, a tomato, an apple and some grapes in a drawer. He wraps the meat and cheese in plastic wrap and packs them in a big paper bag with some paper plates, bread, the fruit and tomato and a knife and fork. Just before he leaves, he checks the freezer and finds three hamburger patties wrapped in plastic — he throws them in the bag, too.

3

As Tom runs out the door, he tosses his baseball and glove in the bag and grabs his bat. When he gets to the park, several of his friends are already there. Nick's older brother, Stephen, is setting up a grill for cooking hamburgers.

4

Tom and his friends claim the last picnic table — a great spot in the sun! Tom grabs his baseball and glove out of the food bag and leaves the bag on top of the table. He figures that this way, the hamburger will be thawed enough to cook by lunchtime!

5

When it's time to break for lunch, Tom's friends go to find a bathroom while Tom unpacks the picnic food. The hamburgers are dripping on the outside, but still frozen on the inside and stuck together! So Tom sets them on a paper plate and uses the knife and fork he brought to pry them apart. When they're almost apart, he uses his fingers to separate them the rest of the way and then leaves them on the plate so they can thaw a bit more before he takes them over to the grill.

6

Tom then sets the cheese and the tomato on the plate and slices them to use on top of the burgers. That way everything will be ready to stick on top of the burgers!

7

When the other kids return, they brush off the surface of the picnic table with their hands and lay the bread out to make a couple of sandwiches from the cold cuts, cheese, and turkey. Nick's brother starts grilling the burgers.

8

Once the burgers have turned brown on the outside, Tom and his friends add cheese to the top of the burgers. Stephen says he wants to cook them a bit more, but the boys insist that they love to eat them rare.

9

Retrieving the fork Tom used to separate the frozen burgers, the boys serve themselves some potato salad. Using the knife, they cut up the apple which had been sitting on top of the picnic table and share it along with the grapes, which had also been sitting out on the top of the picnic table.

CRACKING THE CASE

What food safety mistakes did Tom make?

- At home? _____
- At the park before they played ball? _____
- While getting the food ready? _____
- While he and his friends were eating? _____

What questions do you have for Tom and his friends about what they did?

About the food they were eating?

Does it matter . . .

- How long Tom and his friends played ball? _____
- That Tom didn't go to the bathroom with his friends? _____
- That they chose a table in the sun? _____
- That the hamburger was juicy on the outside when they finished playing ball? _____

Explain why: _____

What might happen to Tom and his friends?