

PATIENT HANDOUT. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO COPY THIS PAGE

Avoiding Food-Borne Infections During Pregnancy

Some types of food are at higher risk for contamination with bacteria such as Listeria and Escherichia Coli that can cause food poisoning because of how they are produced and stored. Pregnancy makes you more susceptible to infections and they may also affect the baby. It would be important to either avoid these foods where possible or ensure that they are properly cooked.

General measures that can prevent bacteria from growing:

- set your fridge at 4 °C (40 °F) or lower and refrigerate raw meat, fish and seafood and leftovers immediately. Store these so that raw juice does not contaminate other foods
- set your freezer at -18 °C (0 °F) or lower and freeze meat to at least 0 °F (-18 °C) for at least 48 hours.
- Wash surfaces and your hands if they have been in contact with raw foods. For surfaces, you can use a spray bottle containing 1 tsp (5 ml) of household bleach to 3 cups (750 ml) of water
- Wash raw vegetables with running water and use a different cutting surface for preparing meat/fish/seafood and vegetables/fruit

The following chart can help you make safer food choices:

Food	Avoid	Instead
Hot dogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eating straight from the package• Spreading juice from packages onto surfaces and dishes/utensils	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cook to safe internal temperature (165 °F / 74 °C)• Wash hands after touching hot dogs
Deli meats	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Non-dried deli meats (bologna, roast beef, turkey breast)• Pre-made ham salad, chicken salad or seafood salad	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eat dried and salted deli meats (salami, pepperoni)• Heat non-dried deli meats well (steaming hot)
Eggs/egg products	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raw or lightly cooked eggs• Products containing raw eggs (some salad dressing, raw dough or batter, sauces, drinks such as egg nog)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cook egg dishes well (internal temperature 165 °F / 74 °C)• Heat homemade egg nog to 160 °F / 71°C• Use pasteurized eggs when making uncooked food with raw eggs
Meat/poultry	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raw or undercooked meat or poultry	Cook meat and poultry to safe temperatures: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ≥ 145 °F / 63 °C whole cuts• ≥ 160 °F / 71 °C ground meat• ≥ 165 °F / 74 °C all poultry (whole and ground)
Seafood	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raw seafood (sushi)• Raw oysters, clams and mussels• Refrigerated smoked seafood	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cook seafood to internal temperature of 165 °F / 74 °C• Cook oysters, clams and mussels until shell opens• Eat smoked seafood in cans or seafood that does not need to be refrigerated until after it is opened
Dairy products	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raw or unpasteurized dairy products• Unpasteurized or pasteurized soft cheeses (Brie, Camembert)• Unpasteurized or pasteurized semi-soft cheeses (Havarti)• Unpasteurized or pasteurized blue-veined cheeses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pasteurized and cooked dairy products (in casserole or au gratin)• Pasteurized cheeses like cheese curds, cheddar and cottage cheese• Pasteurized, processed/spreadable cheese, like cream cheese• Pasteurized and unpasteurized hard cheeses (Romano, Parmesan)
Sprouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raw sprouts (alfalfa, clover, radish and mung beans)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cook sprouts thoroughly
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pâtés/meat spreads	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refrigerated pâtés and meat spreads	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pâtés and meat spreads in cans or that do not have to be refrigerated until after it is opened
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fruit juice/cider	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unpasteurized fruit juice and cider	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drink pasteurized or boil unpasteurized fruit juice and cider to a rolling boil for 1 minute and cool