



## Safe Food Handling in Pregnancy

Listeria is a type of bacteria found in soil, water, and sometimes on plants. Though Listeria is all around our environment, most Listeria infections are caused by people eating contaminated foods. Listeria is important in pregnancy because it is associated with premature delivery, miscarriage, stillbirth, and serious problems for the newborn.

The Food and Drug Administration & Centers for Disease Control provide the following advice for pregnant women:

- **DO NOT EAT** hot dogs, luncheon meats, bologna, or deli meats unless they are reheated until steaming hot.
- **AVOID** getting fluid from hot dog packages on other foods, utensils, and food preparation surfaces, and wash hands after handling hot dogs, luncheon meats, and deli meats.
- **DO NOT EAT** soft cheeses such as feta, Brie, Camembert, blue-veined cheeses, and Mexican style cheeses such as “queso blanco fresco” **UNLESS** it is labeled as made with pasteurized milk. Make sure the label says “Made with Pasteurized Milk.”
  - **It is safe to eat** hard cheeses, semi-soft cheeses such as mozzarella, pasteurized processed cheese slices and spreads, cream cheese, cottage cheese, and yogurt.
- **DO NOT EAT** refrigerated pâté or meat spreads. ○ **IT IS SAFE TO EAT** canned or shelf-stable pâté and meat spreads.
- **DO NOT EAT** refrigerated smoked seafood unless it is an ingredient in a cooked dish such as a casserole. Examples of refrigerated smoked seafood include salmon, trout, whitefish, cod, tuna, mackerel, which are most often labeled as “nova-style”, “lox”, “kippered”, “smoked,” or “jerky.” This fish is found in the refrigerated section or sold at deli counters of grocery stores and delicatessens.
  - **It is safe to eat** foods that do not need refrigeration like canned tuna and canned salmon. Refrigerate after opening.
- **DO NOT DRINK** raw (unpasteurized ) milk or eat foods that contain unpasteurized milk.
- **DO NOT EAT** salads made in the store such as ham salad, chicken salad, egg salad, tuna salad, or seafood salad.
- Use all refrigerated perishable items that are precooked or ready-to-eat as soon as possible.
- Clean your refrigerator regularly.
- Use a refrigerator thermometer to make sure that the temperature always stays at 40°F or below.

