

Fish that's okay to eat: The full list is much longer, but these are the most popular:

- Tuna: Canned chunk light, skipjack
- Salmon
- Catfish
- Halibut
- Herring
- Anchovies
- Sardines
- Tilapia
- Trout
- Sole
- Squid
- Clams
- Scallops
- Oysters
- Bass
- Mahi Mahi
- Lobster

Unpasteurized Cheeses, Milk and Juice

Soft cheeses like brie, gorgonzola and camembert that are imported or made from unpasteurized milk can carry listeria. Same goes for unpasteurized milk and juices.

If your soft cheese is from the US (not imported), then by law it has to be made from pasteurized milk, so it's totally okay to eat. If you're not sure, read the label; if it says "unpasteurized," "imported" or "raw milk," avoid it.

Deli Meats

Listeria can sometimes develop in deli meats. These include: Cold deli meats (AKA sandwich meat, lunch meat, cold cuts, sliced meat). This includes both the meat you get freshly sliced at the deli counter and the pre-sliced meat from brands like Oscar Meyer, Hillshire Farm, etc.

- Hot dogs
- Cold cured meats like salami and smoked fish/lox

To be extra safe, cook meat well and either avoid cold cuts while you're pregnant or heat until they're steaming. And be sure to wash your hands well with soap and hot water after handling raw meat such as chicken and pork.

Unwashed Fruits and Veggies

Take a little extra time and scrub the dirt off those fruits and veggies. And while you want to eat of lots of vegetables and fruit while you're pregnant, you should probably leave sprouts—like alfalfa and bean—out of your salads, as they've been repeatedly linked to salmonella, listeria and E. coli outbreaks over the last three decades.

Caffeine and Pregnancy

Should pregnant people have caffeine? The most conservative recommendations are 200 milligrams of caffeine a day. That's about one 12-ounce cup of coffee or two and half shots of espresso, and there's evidence that even more than that doesn't increase the risk of miscarriage. So don't hold back on that latte—you'll get some extra calcium too.

The same rules apply for caffeinated sodas and teas. As for herbal teas, check with your doctor to make sure the specific herbs are safe for a baby.

Alcohol and Pregnancy

Excessive drinking during pregnancy causes fetal alcohol syndrome, and your ob-gyn or midwife will almost definitely tell you absolutely no alcohol. While there isn't a lot of information about minimal alcohol consumption during pregnancy, the recommendation is to avoid alcohol during pregnancy.



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You want to eat right when you're pregnant, but sometimes it can be hard to know just, what that means.

In addition to eating a well-balanced diet, getting extra calories and taking your prenatal vitamins to get nutrients like folic acid and iron, there's also a list of foods to stay away from during pregnancy. You'll find the do-not-eat list further down, but first, let's talk about why you can't eat certain things when you're pregnant.

Why should you avoid certain foods during pregnancy?

Your immune system is distracted by the growing baby in your belly during the first and third trimesters, so you're more susceptible to illnesses caused by bacteria, viruses and parasites—including those found in food like E. coli, salmonella and toxoplasmosis. Not only can these make you sick, but severe cases can cause preterm labor or miscarriage.

Also, since you're passing along almost everything to your growing baby, what you eat—from the mercury in fish to caffeine in coffee—affects them too.

What is listeria?

You may have heard of listeria after recent outbreaks. Listeria is a food-borne bacteria and being pregnant puts you at greater risk of getting sick with listeriosis (illness caused by ingesting listeria) and experience complications from it.

Listeriosis infections are rare, but there are still a few dozen instances of it every year. So how do you avoid it? Take extra food safety measures to keep yourself safe regardless of which foods you decide to eat:

Practice safe food handling by washing your produce and washing your hands every time you touch uncooked food.

- Clean your fridge and kitchen regularly.
- Cook things until well-done.

As with most things related to pregnancy, if you're unsure about what's safe to eat or drink and what's not, be sure to talk with your healthcare provider.

What Not to Eat When Pregnant

- Raw fish, shellfish, meat, and eggs.
- Fish high in mercury, such as shark, swordfish, mackerel, marlin and ahi, albacore, and bigeye tuna.
- Unpasteurized cheeses, milk, or juices.
- Cold deli meats or lox.
- Unwashed fruits and veggies.
- High amounts of caffeine.
- Alcohol.

Raw Fish and Shellfish

Sushi: The common advice from doctors is to not eat sushi containing raw fish while you're pregnant, as raw fish can contain parasites and bacteria that can make you sick.

Keep in mind that not all sushi contains raw fish, and fish that isn't high in mercury provides nutrients that are essential for fetal development. So go ahead and give in to your sushi craving—just make sure it's fully cooked.

Raw shellfish: You should avoid eating things like raw oysters while you're pregnant—those parasites and bacteria again.

Raw Meat and Eggs

Raw or undercooked meats can carry harmful things like toxoplasmosis and salmonella.

Raw and unpasteurized eggs can carry salmonella, so be sure to cook your eggs thoroughly. The same goes for raw flour, too. (Sorry, no raw cookie dough while you're pregnant.)

Fish High in Mercury

Some fish have mercury, which is a dangerous heavy metal. Here's a convenient wallet card listing which fish are safe and which to avoid. It's useful for early childhood, too, as mercury can affect your child's developing brain and other organs.

Fish to avoid:

- Tuna: albacore, ahi, bigeye, yellowfin
- Mackerel: Spanish, gulf, king
- Sea bass
- Grouper
- Marlin
- Orange roughy
- Shark
- Swordfish
- Tilefish
- Bluefish

