

Foods to Avoid During Pregnancy

Foods To Avoid	Reason	Alternative
Soft Cheeses Soft Cheeses made from unpasteurized milk. Brie, Feta, Camembert, Roquefort, Blue veined cheeses, and Mexican style cheeses such as queso fresco, queso blanco, and panela.	These may contain the bacteria E. coli or Listeria. These have the ability to cross the placenta and may infect the baby leading to infection or blood poisoning, which can be life-threatening for the baby leading to miscarriage.	All soft non-imported (made in the USA) cheeses made with pasteurized milk are safe to eat. This includes hard cheeses such as Cheddar, Swiss, Colby Jack, Parmesan, Mozzarella. Also cream cheese and cottage cheese are both safe.
Uncooked Eggs Uncooked eggs or products with raw eggs. Cookie dough, cake batters, homemade ice cream or custards, homemade eggnog, homemade Ceasar dressing may all be made with raw eggs.	Raw eggs may contain salmonella.	Cook eggs until yolks are firm. If the eggs in a recipe are cooked at some point, this will reduce the exposure to salmonella. Commercially manufactured ice cream, dressings, and eggnog are made with pasteurized eggs and do not increase the risk of salmonella.
Fish with Mercury Fish with mercury such as shark, swordfish, king mackerel, and tilefish (golden or white snapper)	Contains high levels of mercury.	Eat up to 12 ounces a week of fish and shellfish that are lower in mercury, such as shrimp, salmon, tilapia, pollock, and catfish. Limit consumption of albacore tuna to 6 ounces per week.
Unpasteurized juice or cider	May contain <i>E. coli</i>	Drink pasteurized juice. Bring unpasteurized juice or cider to a rolling boil and boil for at least 1 minute before drinking.
Store-Made Salads Salads made in a store, such as egg salad, chicken salad, and seafood salad.	May contain <i>Listeria</i> .	Make salads at home, following the food safety basics: clean, separate, cook, and chill.
Raw Shellfish Raw Shellfish, such as oysters and clams	May contain <i>Vibrio</i> bacteria.	Cook shellfish to 145° F.
Sprouts Raw or undercooked Sprouts, such as alfalfa, clover, mung bean, and radish	May contain E. coli or Salmonella.	Cook sprouts thoroughly.
Deli Meats Hot dogs, luncheon meats, cold cuts, fermented or dry sausage, and other deli -style meat and poultry	May contain <i>Listeria</i> .	Even if the label says that the meat is precooked, reheat these meats to steaming hot or 165° F before eating.
Caffeine	Some research shows that large amounts of caffeine are associated with miscarriage, premature birth, low birth weight, and withdrawal symptoms in infants.	As a general rule, caffeine should be limited to fewer than 200 mg per day during pregnancy. You can use the following guide: 12 oz coffee = 200mg; 12 oz caffeinated soda = ~40 mg; 12 oz black or green tea = ~80mg
Alcohol	Prenatal exposure to alcohol can interfere with the healthy development of the baby. Depending on the amount, timing, and pattern of use, alcohol consumption during pregnancy can lead to Fetal Alcohol Syndrome or other developmental disorders	There is NO amount of alcohol that is known to be safe during pregnancy, and therefore alcohol should be avoided during pregnancy.