

Foods to Avoid in Pregnancy

You should only drink small amounts of caffeinated drinks (if at all), as high caffeine consumption is not good for pregnant women. Most women feel better if they drink adequate water. Drinking plenty of water helps prevent constipation, urinary tract infections and swelling in your legs and feet. Your urine should be pale yellow (sometimes bright yellow after taking your prenatal vitamin). If your urine appears very dark yellow or tea-colored or concentrated, you probably need to drink more water.

Listeria is a bacteria found in unpasteurized milk, some luncheon meats and smoked seafood. Foods to avoid in pregnancy include soft, unprocessed or unpasteurized cheeses, such as Brie, feta Camembert, blue-veined cheeses and Mexican-style cheeses such as queso fresco, queso blanco and panela.

Also be cautious when eating hot dogs, luncheon meats or deli meats, unless they are heated to steaming (at least 160 degrees F). Do not eat refrigerated smoked salmon unless it is in a cooked dish, such as a casserole, and avoid cold pate or meat spreads. Heating the foods listed above to steaming hot will kill any dangerous bacteria, making them safe to eat. Wash all raw foods well before eating.

Semi-soft and hard cheeses including mozzarella are safe. You can safely enjoy any cheese that has been pasteurized and also processed soft cheeses such as cream cheese and cottage cheese.

You may have questions about what fish are safe to eat in pregnancy. We recommend you eat no more than two servings of fish per week. Fish and shellfish do contain omega-3 fatty acids and other important nutrients.

While pregnant, avoid eating shark, grouper, marlin, orange roughy, king mackerel, swordfish and tilefish, as these are known to contain high levels of mercury. Also, eat only three 6 oz. servings a month or less of the following: saltwater bass, croaker, canned white albacore tuna, fresh Bluefin or ahi tuna, sea trout, bluefish and American lobster (Maine lobster).

You can eat a serving of chunk light canned tuna once or twice per week. You can safely enjoy other fish in moderation, once or twice per week (12 oz per week). Avoid raw fish, found in sushi.

For more information about food safety in pregnancy, go to the FDA website at:
<http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/HealthEducators/ucm081785.htm>



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