

Foods to avoid in Pregnancy



There are certain foods that you should try to avoid during pregnancy. These foods could possibly cause harm to you and your developing baby because of the types of bacteria that can grow in these foods or toxins such as mercury.

- ☺ Don't eat raw or undercooked meat, chicken, or fish. Cook raw foods thoroughly and cook ready-to-eat meats, such as hot dogs or deli meats (ham, bologna, salami, and corned beef) until they're steaming hot. Wash your hands, knives, cutting boards, or cooking surfaces with warm soapy water after handling raw or undercooked meat.
- ☺ Don't eat refrigerated pâté, meat spreads, or smoked seafood (salmon, trout, whitefish, cod, tuna, and mackerel). Canned or shelf-stable pâtés, meat spreads, or smoked seafood may be eaten.
- ☺ Eat tuna in moderation (about 2 meals a week) due to its mercury levels. Eat light tuna, not albacore.
- ☺ Don't eat large fish, such as shark, swordfish, king mackerel, and tilefish, since they contain high mercury levels. Also avoid eating fish caught by family and friends because of possible mercury consumption from freshwater lakes and streams. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration advise that pregnant women, women of childbearing age, nursing mothers, and young children can safely eat 12 ounces per week of cooked fish (about 2 or 3 meals). You can eat shellfish, smaller ocean fish, or farm-raised fish. Try to eat a variety of fish.
- ☺ Don't eat raw eggs or foods that contain raw or lightly cooked eggs, such as soft-scrambled eggs, Caesar dressing, mayonnaise, or Hollandaise sauce.
- ☺ Don't eat soft, unpasteurized cheeses. Hard cheeses, processed cheeses, cream cheese, and cottage cheeses are safe. Check the label for a pasteurize notice.
- ☺ Don't drink raw (unpasteurized) milk or foods that contain unpasteurized milk.
- ☺ Don't eat raw sprouts, especially alfalfa.
- ☺ Limit how much liver you eat. Liver is the only food that has excessive amounts of vitamin A. Too much vitamin A may cause birth defects. Fruits and vegetables that contain vitamin A are perfectly safe to eat. If you're taking a prenatal vitamin or other vitamins, check with your provider about total vitamin A content of your supplements.

Talk to your practitioner if you have any questions about what foods to avoid.

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