

## Foods to Avoid

Awareness of certain foods to avoid is essential for a healthy pregnancy. Some foods can pose risks to you and your baby. Here's what to steer clear of:



- **High-Mercury Fish:** Fish like shark, swordfish, and king mackerel have high levels of mercury, which can affect your baby's developing nervous system. Choose low-mercury options like salmon, shrimp, and sardines.

- **Soft Cheeses:** Avoid cheeses like brie, camembert, and blue cheese unless they are made from pasteurized milk to reduce the risk of Listeria contamination.

- **Processed Meats:** Hot dogs, sausages, and deli meats may contain harmful bacteria such as Listeria or parasites like Toxoplasma. Always reheat deli meats to steaming before consuming.



- **Unpasteurized Dairy and Juices:** Avoid unpasteurized milk, soft cheeses, and unpasteurized juices to minimize risks of harmful bacteria.

- **Caffeine and Alcohol:** Limit caffeine to 200 mg per day (roughly one 12 oz cup of coffee) and avoid alcohol entirely, as it can harm your baby's development.



**Caution with Herbal Teas:** Certain herbal teas, such as licorice, ginseng, and dong quai, can be harmful during pregnancy. Always check with your healthcare provider before consuming herbal teas.

Understanding these risks helps in making informed dietary choices for a healthy pregnancy.