

Food safety guide during pregnancy

Hormonal changes during pregnancy affect the mother's immune system, which can lead to an increased susceptibility to certain bacteria and other nutrients. Throughout pregnancy, it is important to avoid or limit certain foods. See also the accompanying pocket guide to this educational handout.

Substance	Foods to Avoid	Foods to Substitute
Listeria/Listeriosis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listeriosis is a disease caused by eating the bacterium <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>. It can be transmitted to the fetus via the placenta even if mother has no symptoms. It can lead to premature delivery, miscarriage, stillbirth or serious health problems for the newborn. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soft, mold-ripened cheeses such as feta, brie, camembert, blue-veined cheeses and Mexican-style cheeses such as <i>queso blanco fresco</i> Hot dogs, luncheon or deli meats, refrigerated pate or meat spreads Refrigerated smoked seafood including salmon, trout, whitefish, cod, tuna, mackerel (often labeled as nova style, lox, kippered, smoked or jerky) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard cheeses Semi-soft cheeses such as mozzarella, pasteurized processed cheese slices and spreads, cream cheese and cottage cheese Shelf-stable pate and meat spreads Canned fish or shelf-stable smoked seafood
Toxoplasmosis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is caused by a parasite found in undercooked meats and carried by cats. It results from eating undercooked meat and poultry or unwashed fruits and vegetables, from cleaning a litter box or from handling contaminated soil. It may or may not cause mild flu-like symptoms and can be passed to a developing fetus, resulting in miscarriage, disability or retardation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raw or undercooked meat, uncooked eggs, raw (unpasteurized) milk Avoid contact with cat feces (directly or indirectly through soil) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooked meat, cooked eggs and pasteurized dairy To avoid toxoplasmosis contamination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be sure to wash hands and surfaces thoroughly and often, especially after handling raw meat or gardening Wash all raw fruits and vegetables Refrigerate perishable foods immediately and cook to proper temperatures <p><i>*Go to www.fightbac.org for recommended temperatures and additional food safety tips</i></p>
Mercury <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mercury is a heavy metal that can be toxic in high enough doses. Certain fish may be contaminated with mercury. Too much mercury may cause mental retardation in the newborn. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shark, swordfish, mackerel, tile fish <p><i>*Canned lite tuna – limit albacore and tuna steak to six ounces per week (equivalent of one 3½ round by 1½ inch tall can)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eat at least two servings per week of seafood (shrimp, crab, cod, clams, scallops, canned light tuna, canned salmon, pollock, catfish and others) for omega-3 fatty acid intake Do not exceed a total of 12 ounces per week of seafood, or one large tuna can – 4" round X 2" tall.
For more information on the risks of eating certain types of fish, go to the Texas Department of State Health Services at http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/seafood/eatrisk.shtm and click on Guide to Eating Texas Fish and Crabs.		
Caffeine There are no known risks to drinking/eating up to 200 to 300 mg per day of caffeine.	Caffeine content of some common foods and beverages: Coffee: 65-120 mg (tall iced nonfat latte has 75 mg) Tea: 20-90 mg (Celestial Seasonings green tea 1 bag = 30 mg, black tea = 60 mg) Soft drinks: 20-40 mg (12 oz can of cola has 29 mg. Mountain Dew has 54 mg) Chocolate candy bar: 5-35 mg	
Alcohol Birth defects, fetal alcohol syndrome	AVOID completely There is no known safe amount to drink during pregnancy.	
Nicotine (smoking and second-hand smoke) Stillbirth, prematurity, low birth weight, sudden infant death syndromes (SIDS), asthma and other respiratory problems	AVOID completely Nicotine patches and gum are safe in pregnancy to promote quitting.	