**FOODS TO AVOID DURING PREGNANCY**

Un pasteurized Milk

Do not drink raw (unpasteurized) milk, including unpasteurized goats or sheep’s milk or any food that is made out of them, such as soft goats’ cheese.

Un pasteurized milk may contain a bacteria called [listeria](http://americanpregnancy.org/pregnancycomplications/listeria.html), which can cause [miscarriage](http://americanpregnancy.org/pregnancycomplications/miscarriage.html). Listeria has the ability to cross the placenta and may infect the baby leading to infection or blood poisoning, which can be life-threatening. Make sure that any milk you drink is pasteurized.

Cheese

Do not eat mould-ripened soft cheeses, such as brie, camembert and others with a similar rind this includes [mould-ripened soft cheese made with goats’ milk](http://www.nhs.uk/chq/Pages/2684.aspx?CategoryID=54&SubCategoryID=216). It is also unsafe to consume soft blue-veined cheeses, such as Danish blue, gorgonzola and Roquefort.

Imported soft cheeses may contain bacteria called Listeria, which can cause [miscarriage](http://americanpregnancy.org/pregnancycomplications/miscarriage.html), [stillbirth](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Stillbirth/Pages/Definition.aspx) or severe illness in a newborn baby. Listeria has the ability to cross the placenta and may infect the baby leading to infection or blood poisoning, which can be life-threatening.

Meat

Do not eat raw or undercooked meat.

Cook all meat and poultry thoroughly so there’s no trace of pink or blood. Take particular care with sausages and minced meat.

Avoid liver or liver products, such as liver pâté or liver sausage, as they may contain a lot of vitamin A. Too much vitamin A can harm your baby.

Raw Meat

Uncooked seafood and rare or undercooked beef or poultry should be avoided because of the risk of contamination with coliform bacteria, [toxoplasmosis](http://americanpregnancy.org/pregnancycomplications/toxoplasmosis.html), and salmonella.

Deli Meat

Deli meats can be contaminated with [listeria](http://americanpregnancy.org/pregnancycomplications/listeria.html), which can cause miscarriage. Listeria has the ability to cross the placenta and may infect the baby leading to infection or blood poisoning, which may be life-threatening

Fish with Mercury

Fish that contain high levels of mercury should be avoided. Mercury consumed during pregnancy has been linked to developmental delays and brain damage. A sample of these types of fish include: shark, swordfish, king mackerel, and tilefish. Canned, chunk light tuna generally has a lower amount of mercury than other tuna, but still should only be eaten in moderation.

Smoked Seafood

Refrigerated, smoked seafood often labeled as lox, nova style, kippered, or jerky should be avoided because it could be contaminated with Listeria.

Raw Shellfish

The majority of seafood-borne illness is caused by undercooked shellfish, which include oysters, clams, and mussels. Cooking helps prevent some types of infection, but it does not prevent the algae-related infections that are associated with red tides. Raw shellfish pose a concern for everybody, and they should be avoided altogether during pregnancy.

Raw Eggs

Raw eggs or any foods that contain raw eggs should be avoided because of the potential exposure to salmonella. Some homemade Caesar dressings, mayonnaise, homemade ice cream or custards, and Hollandaise sauces may be made with raw eggs.

Make sure that eggs are thoroughly cooked until the whites and yolks are solid. This prevents the risk of salmonella food poisoning.

Pate

Refrigerated pate or meat spreads should be avoided because they may contain the bacteria listeria. Canned pate, or shelf-safe meat spreads can be eaten.

Unwashed Vegetables

[Toxoplasmosis](http://americanpregnancy.org/pregnancycomplications/toxoplasmosis.html) may contaminate the soil where the vegetables were grown.

Wash fruit, vegetables and salads to remove all traces of soil, which may contain toxoplasma, a parasite that can cause [toxoplasmosis](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/toxoplasmosis/Pages/Introduction.aspx).

[Caffeine](http://americanpregnancy.org/pregnancyhealth/caffeine.html)

Avoid caffeine during the first trimester to reduce the likelihood of a [miscarriage](http://americanpregnancy.org/pregnancycomplications/miscarriage.html). As a general rule, caffeine should be limited to fewer than 200 mg per day during pregnancy. Caffeine is a diuretic, which means it helps eliminate fluids from the body. This can result in water and calcium loss. It is important that you are drinking plenty of water, juice, and milk rather than caffeinated beverages.

[Alcohol](http://americanpregnancy.org/pregnancyhealth/alcohol.html)

There is NO amount of alcohol that is known to be safe during pregnancy, and therefore alcohol should be avoided during pregnancy. 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](http://americanpregnancy.org/pregnancycomplications/fetalalcohol.html) or other developmental disorders. If you consumed alcohol before you knew you were pregnant, stop drinking now. You should continue to avoid alcohol during breastfeeding. Exposure of alcohol to an infant poses harmful risks, and alcohol does reach the baby during breastfeeding.