

Safer Food

Choices for









PREGNANT PEOPLE

How to
nurture your
body during
pregnancy

SAFER FOOD CHOICES FOR PREGNANT PEOPLE

Always follow the four steps to food safety—clean, separate, cook, and chill—to protect yourself from food poisoning. Learn about current foodborne outbreaks and the foods linked to them.



FOODS	RISKIER CHOICE	SAFER CHOICE
 <p>POULTRY & MEAT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raw or undercooked poultry or meat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poultry includes chicken and turkey Meat includes beef, pork, lamb, and veal Unheated deli meat, cold cuts, hot dogs, and fermented or dry sausages Refrigerated pâté or meat spreads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poultry and meat cooked to a safe internal temperature. <i>Use a food thermometer to check.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All poultry, including ground chicken and turkey, cooked to 165°F Whole cuts of beef, veal, lamb, and pork cooked to 145°F (then allow the meat to rest for 3 minutes before carving or eating) Ground meats, such as beef and pork, cooked to 160°F Deli meat, cold cuts, hot dogs, and fermented or dry sausages heated to 165°F or until steaming hot Pâté or meat spreads in sealed, airtight containers that don't need to be kept refrigerated before opening Homemade deli salads
 <p>DELI SALADS</p>	<p>Premade deli salads, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> coleslaw potato salad tuna salad chicken salad egg salad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homemade deli salads
 <p>VEGETABLES & FRUITS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any raw or undercooked sprouts, such as alfalfa and bean Unwashed fresh fruits and vegetables, including lettuce and other leafy greens Cut melon left out for more than 2 hours (1 hour if it's exposed to temperatures hotter than 90°F, such as a picnic or hot car) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooked sprouts (until steaming hot) Washed vegetables and fruits (washed and then cooked are safest) Freshly cut melon or cut melon kept refrigerated for 7 or fewer days
 <p>JUICE</p>	<p>Unpasteurized juice or cider</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pasteurized juice or cider Unpasteurized juice or cider brought to a rolling boil and boiled for at least 1 minute before drinking
 <p>MILK</p>	<p>Unpasteurized (raw) milk, and dairy products made from raw milk</p>	<p>Pasteurized milk, and dairy products made from pasteurized milk</p>
 <p>CHEESE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soft cheese made from unpasteurized (raw) milk—for example, queso fresco, brie, camembert, and blue-veined cheese Unheated cheese sliced at a deli 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard cheese, such as cheddar and swiss Cottage cheese, cream cheese, string cheese, and feta Pasteurized soft cheeses heated to an internal temperature of 165°F or until steaming hot Deli-sliced cheeses heated to 165°F or until steaming hot
 <p>EGGS</p>	<p>Raw or undercooked (runny) eggs, and foods that contain raw or undercooked eggs, such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caesar salad dressing Raw cookie dough or raw batter Homemade eggnog 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eggs cooked until the yolks and whites are firm Egg dishes (frittata, quiche, casserole) cooked to an internal temperature of 165°F if they contain meat or poultry Egg dishes cooked to an internal temperature of 160°F if they do not contain meat or poultry Pasteurized eggs in foods that will not be cooked to a safe temperature, such as mousse and salad dressing
 <p>SEAFOOD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raw or undercooked fish or shellfish, including sashimi, sushi, and ceviche Refrigerated smoked seafood (except in a cooked dish). Refrigerated smoked seafood is usually labeled as "nova-style," "lox," "kippered," "smoked," or "jerky" Fish that contain high amounts of mercury, such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shark Swordfish King mackerel Tile fish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fish cooked to a safe internal temperature of 145°F or until the flesh is opaque and separates easily with a fork Shellfish cooked until shells open during cooking or until flesh is pearly or white, and opaque Smoked fish in sealed, airtight packages or containers that don't need to be kept refrigerated before opening Smoked fish cooked in a casserole or other cooked dishes Canned fish and seafood Fish that contain low amounts of mercury, such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shrimp Canned light tuna Salmon Pollock Catfish
 <p>FLOUR</p>	<p>Raw dough or raw batter made with raw (uncooked) flour</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food made with flour that is cooked following the package directions or recipe Dough and batter made with heat-treated flour and pasteurized eggs Dough and batter that is labeled "edible" or "safe to eat raw"



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases

Accessible version: <https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/communication/pregnant-people.html>

What about caffeine?

It is unclear how caffeine can affect pregnancy, so it is recommended to limit your consumption to 200 mg per day. You can reference the chart below to help guide your caffeine choices.

Food/Drink	Average amount of caffeine in milligrams (mg)
Brewed coffee, 8 ounces	135 mg (ranges between 80-200 mg)
Instant coffee, 8 ounces	75 mg
Decaf coffee, 8 ounces	2 to 15mg
Coffee ice cream or frozen yogurt, 4 ounces	2 mg
Brewed tea, 8 ounces	45 mg (ranges between 15-60 mg)
Instant tea, 8 ounces	26 to 36 mg
Soft drinks (like cola), 12 ounces	35 mg (ranges between 30-45 mg)
Hot cocoa mix, 3 teaspoons or 1 packet	8 to 12 mg
Chocolate milk, 8 ounces	5 to 8 mg
Dark chocolate, 1.45-ounce bar	30 mg
Milk chocolate, 1.55-ounce bar	11 mg
Semi-sweet chocolate chips (1/4 cup)	26 to 28 mg
Chocolate syrup, 1 tablespoon	3 mg

What about tea?

Non-herbal teas are typically considered safe. The concern with herbal teas is the lack of information about the herbs and their effects on a developing fetus. Celestial Seasonings is one brand of tea that reports they do not use any herbs that are considered dangerous in their products.

Some teas are marketed as pregnancy teas and may help prevent pregnancy complications such as preeclampsia, preterm labor, prolonged labor, and postpartum hemorrhage. Some of these teas that are probably safe are as follows:

Red Raspberry Leaf (Likely Safe) – Rich in iron, this herb has helped tone the uterus, increase milk production, decrease nausea, and ease labor pains. **Recommend use only after the first trimester.**

Peppermint Leaf (Likely Safe) – Helpful in relieving nausea/morning sickness and flatulence.

Lemon Balm (Likely Safe) – Has a calming effect and helps relieve irritability, insomnia, and anxiety.

Ginger root (Possibly Safe) – Helps relieve nausea and vomiting.

As an alternative, you can make your own herbal teas by adding oranges, apples, pineapples, lemons, limes, pars, cinnamon, or mint leaves to boiling water or decaffeinated tea.

What about sugar and artificial sweeteners?

Sugar is safe for consumption in moderation during pregnancy. High simple sugar intake during pregnancy may contribute to an excessive weight gain during pregnancy as well as cause the development of other pregnancy complications such as gestational diabetes, preeclampsia, and preterm birth. It is best consume foods that have a lower glycemic level as sugar has no nutritional value and suppresses the immune system.

Research is limited on the safety of non-nutritive sweeteners (artificial sweeteners) during pregnancy. The non-nutritive sweeteners that are considered safe in pregnancy include: Stevia, Sunett, Equal or NutraSweet, and Splenda.

What about alcohol?

There is no amount of alcohol that has been approved for consumption during pregnancy. Drinking alcohol during pregnancy can make your baby more likely to have premature birth, birth defects, and fetal alcohol spectrum disorders.

Resources

- American Pregnancy Association
- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
- March of Dimes