



Four Simple Steps to Food Safety

Clean: Wash your hands and surfaces often with hot soapy water before handling food .

Separate: Separate raw meat, poultry and seafood from other foods in your grocery shopping cart and in your refrigerator. Don't allow cross contamination between raw and cooked foods.

Cook: To prevent listeriosis, cook to proper temperatures and use a food thermometer. Pregnant women, the elderly and those with compromised immune systems should reheat luncheon meat, cold cuts, deli-style meat and poultry until steaming hot.

Chill: Refrigerate or freeze ready-to-eat foods promptly. (within 2 hours)

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Because *Listeria* can grow at refrigeration temperatures of 40 degrees F. or below, FSIS and FDA advise all consumers to:

- Use all perishable items that are precooked or ready-to-eat as soon as possible.
- Clean refrigerators regularly.
- Use a refrigerator thermometer to make sure temperature stays at 40 degrees F or below.

For More Information About Safe Food Handling and Preparation

USDA's Meat and Poultry Hotline:
1-800-535-4555

FDA's Food Information and Seafood Hotline: **1-888-SAFE FOOD**

Partnership for Food Safety Education Web Site www.fightbac.org

Gateway to Government Food Safety Information: www.foodsafety.gov

Or contact your local cooperative extension office.

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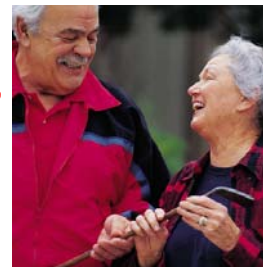
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Listeriosis Food Safety to Protect Your Family

• **Are You Over 60?**



• **Are You Pregnant?**

• **Do You Have a Serious Illness?**



Protect Your Family from Listeria



Listeria is a bacteria that can cause illness.

If you eat food which has Listeria in it, you may become ill. The illness is rare and most people just feel like they have the flu. Listeriosis can be much more serious for people who are over 60, or have a serious illness such as cancer, AIDS, cirrhosis or diabetes. If a pregnant woman becomes ill with Listeria, it can lead to premature delivery, infection of the newborn, or even stillbirth.

Listeria can be found in many foods.

Listeria is in soil and can live on fruits and vegetables and in raw meat, poultry and fish. Listeria has been found in soft cheeses such as Mexican-style, Feta and Brie that have not been made and handled properly. Listeria has also been found in hot dogs and foods from the deli.

Cannot see, taste or smell Listeria

Listeria hides from a person's taste and smell.

Listeria can be killed by high heat.

Listeria will grow in the refrigerator and in warm food. Foods **MUST** be heated thoroughly to destroy Listeria.

Handling Food Safely

Follow these food safety tips:



- Wash hands before working with food or eating.
- Wash fresh fruits and vegetables with cold water and a vegetable brush before eating.
- Keep raw meat, poultry and fish and their juices separate from cooked and ready-to-eat foods.
- Wash hands, sinks, counters, knives and dishes with soap and hot water after handling uncooked food.
- Thoroughly cook all meat, poultry, seafood and eggs before eating.
- Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Do not allow hot or cold foods to stand at room temperature for longer than two hours.
- Chill leftovers quickly in the refrigerator and reheat leftovers until steaming hot.



If you are pregnant, over 60, or have a serious illness, reduce your risk of Listeria by following these added guidelines:



Avoid Soft Cheeses such as:

Mexican-style cheeses like queso blanco, queso fresco and Panela, as well as Feta, Brie and Camembert cheeses and blue-veined cheeses such as Roquefort unless made from pasteurized milk.

Do Not Drink Raw milk or eat foods that contain unpasteurized milk.

Thoroughly heat ready-to-eat foods such as hot dogs and deli meats to steaming hot **BEFORE** eating.

Do not eat refrigerated pates or meat spreads unless they are canned or shelf stable types.

Do not eat refrigerated smoked seafood unless it is contained in a cooked dish such as a casserole.

Avoid “nova style” lox, kippered, smoked or jerky type fish sold in the refrigerated section or at the deli.



Eat canned or shelf stable smoked or other seafood.