



# Food Safety Information

## Protect Your Baby and Yourself from Listeriosis

Pregnant women are at higher risk of getting sick from *Listeria monocytogenes*, a harmful bacterium found in many foods. *Listeria* can cause a disease called Listeriosis that can result in miscarriage, premature delivery, serious sickness, or the death of a newborn baby. If you are pregnant, you need to know what foods are safe to eat.



### Clean

- Clean up spills in your refrigerator right away, especially juices from raw meat and poultry.
- Clean the inside walls and shelves of your refrigerator with hot water and liquid soap.
- Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water after touching hot dogs, raw meat, poultry or seafood.



### Separate

Keep raw meat, fish and poultry away from ready-to-eat foods.



### Cook

Cook food to a safe minimum internal temperature. Check with a food thermometer and heat lunch meats until steaming.



### Chill

*Listeria* can grow in the refrigerator. The refrigerator should be set to 40°F or lower and the freezer to

0°F or lower. Use a refrigerator thermometer to check the inside temperature.

### How do I know if I have Listeriosis?

- Symptoms can include fever, fatigue, chills, headache, backache, general aches, upset stomach, abdominal pain and diarrhea.
- Gastrointestinal symptoms may appear within a few hours to two to three days, and disease may appear two to six weeks after ingestion. The duration is variable.
- Pregnant women are at higher risk and may develop problems with pregnancy that include miscarriage, fetal death or severe illness or death in newborns.
- Every year an estimated 1,600 Americans become sick and 260 people die from Listeriosis.

### What should I do if I think I have Listeriosis?

Call your doctor, nurse or health clinic if you have any of these

signs. If you have Listeriosis, your doctor can treat you.

### What foods are associated with Listeriosis?

- Hot dogs, luncheon meats, bologna, or other deli meats unless they are reheated until steaming hot.
- Refrigerated pâté, meat spreads from a meat counter, or smoked seafood found in the refrigerated section of the store. Foods that do not need refrigeration, like canned meat spreads, are okay to eat. Remember to refrigerate after opening.
- Raw (unpasteurized) milk and foods that have unpasteurized milk in them.
- Salads made in the store such as ham salad, chicken salad, egg salad, tuna salad or seafood salad.
- Soft cheeses such as Feta, queso blanco, queso fresco, Brie, Camembert, blue-veined cheeses, and Panela unless it is labeled as "MADE WITH PASTEURIZED MILK."

## Food Safety Questions?

Call the **USDA Meat & Poultry Hotline** toll free at

**1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854)**

The hotline is open year-round and can be reached from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Eastern Time) Monday through Friday. Available in English and Spanish.



Send E-mail questions to [MPHotline@usda.gov](mailto:MPHotline@usda.gov)

Consumers with food safety questions can also "Ask Karen," the FSIS virtual representative. Available 24/7 at [AskKaren.gov](http://AskKaren.gov).

