



Food Safety During Pregnancy

EXTENSION

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When you are pregnant your body's immune system is weaker. You are more likely to develop foodborne illnesses. Most foods are safe to eat when you follow some simple practices. Some foods are not safe to eat during pregnancy. They are more likely to carry bacteria and cause illnesses.

Food safety tips

- Wash your hands with soap after touching raw meat or whenever they are dirty. Use warm water and soap. Scrub for 20 seconds.
- Keep raw meats, poultry, and seafood from touching other foods. Store these foods on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator or freezer.
- Cook meat completely. Using a meat thermometer, you can make sure your meat is thoroughly cooked by inserting the thermometer into the thickest part of the meat. Cook steaks and roasts to 145F, ground beef and pork to 160 F, and chicken to 165 F. Reheat leftovers to at least 165 F.
- Wash fresh fruits and vegetables before eating.
- Rinse the lid on canned food before opening.
- Wash cooking utensils with hot, soapy water.

Foods not safe to eat during pregnancy

- Hot dogs or deli meats unless heated to 165°F.
- Unpasteurized milk, juice (such as apple cider), unpasteurized soft cheeses (feta, brie, queso, and blue cheese).
- Store made salads such as chicken, egg or tuna salad.
- Foods made with raw egg like homemade dressings, raw cookie dough, or eggnog.
- Refrigerated smoked seafood like whitefish, salmon, and mackerel.

- Herbs and plants used as medicines without your doctor's approval. **Some are very harmful** including: bitter melon (karela), noni juice, and unripe papaya.
- Raw sprouts such as alfalfa, clover, radish, and mung beans.

Is fish safe to eat during pregnancy?

Fish and shellfish are food sources of protein and healthy fats. However, some fish are not safe to eat during pregnancy. They contain high levels of mercury that can harm your unborn baby.

Below is a guideline about which fish are safe to eat. Safe types of fishes can be eaten on average 2 meals a week or 12 ounces a week. All seafood should be cooked to 145F and reheated to 165F.

Not Safe	Safe
Swordfish	Shrimp, Crab, Clams,
Tilefish	Crawfish
Mackerel	Canned Tuna
Shark	Oysters
Raw Fish	Scallops
Raw Shellfish	Salmon
	Catfish, Cod, Tilapia

The Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service

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The Cooperative Extension Service is the largest, most successful informal educational organization in the world. It is a nationwide system funded and guided by a partnership of federal, state, and local governments that delivers information to help people help themselves through the land-grant university system.

Extension carries out programs in the broad categories of agriculture, natural resources and environment; family and consumer sciences; 4-H and other youth; and community resource development. Extension staff members live and work among the people they serve to help stimulate and educate Americans to plan ahead and cope with their problems.

Some characteristics of the Cooperative Extension system are:

- The federal, state, and local governments cooperatively share in its financial support and program direction.
 - It is administered by the land-grant university as designated by the state legislature through an Extension director.
 - Extension programs are nonpolitical, objective, and research-based information.
 - It provides practical, problem-oriented education for people of all ages. It is designated to take the knowledge of the university to those persons who do not or cannot participate in the formal classroom instruction of the university.
- It utilizes research from university, government, and other sources to help people make their own decisions.
 - More than a million volunteers help multiply the impact of the Extension professional staff.
 - It dispenses no funds to the public.
 - It is not a regulatory agency, but it does inform people of regulations and of their options in meeting them.
 - Local programs are developed and carried out in full recognition of national problems and goals.
 - The Extension staff educates people through personal contacts, meetings, demonstrations, and the mass media.
 - Extension has the built-in flexibility to adjust its programs and subject matter to meet new needs. Activities shift from year to year as citizen groups and Extension workers close to the problems advise changes.

References

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. The Best Foods to Eat During Pregnancy. October 2018. Available at <https://www.eatright.org/health/pregnancy/what-to-eat-when-expecting/the-best-foods-to-eat-during-pregnancy>. Accessed June 2021.

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