

FOOD SAFETY

LISTERIOSIS



Preventing food borne illnesses is important for everyone. Food borne illnesses can be severe and even life threatening for pregnant women and their unborn babies, children or persons with weakened immune systems. If symptoms are severe or the people are very young, old, pregnant or already ill— **call the doctor immediately**.

What is Listeriosis?



Listeriosis is a serious infection in humans caused by bacteria. The hormonal changes during pregnancy can cause the mother's immune system to be more susceptible to listeriosis. Listeriosis can be transferred to the infant through the placenta when the mother is showing no signs of the illness. Listeriosis in pregnant women can result in miscarriage, or fetal death.

How do I get Listeriosis?

Listeriosis results from eating foods that are contaminated with the bacteria. Persons who are at risk can reduce their chances of becoming ill by following food safety precautions.



What are the symptoms and treatment for Listeriosis?

The symptoms of listeriosis are flu-like with the sudden onset of fever, chills, muscle aches, diarrhea or upset stomach. The symptoms can take a few days or weeks to appear and can be mild to severe.

The symptoms may include:

- Headache
- Stiff neck
- Confusion
- Convulsions



A blood test can be performed to find out if the cause is listeriosis. Treatment for listeriosis is antibiotic therapy and is used during pregnancy. The antibiotic therapy for the mother can prevent infection of the fetus or newborn. Newborns with listeriosis can be treated with antibiotics as well.

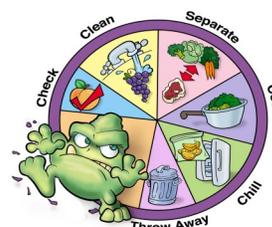
What can I do to prevent listeriosis?

1. Cook lunchmeat, deli meat and hot dogs until steaming hot.
2. Soft cheeses such as Feta, Brie and Camembert; blue veined cheese such as queso blanco, queso fresco and Panela should not be eaten unless it is labeled as made with Pasteurized milk. Hard and semi-soft cheeses like mozzarella, pasteurized processed cheese slices and spreads, cream cheese and cottage cheese can be eaten. Raw milk should not be eaten.
3. Refrigerated pates or meat spreads such as liver cheese, or braunschweiger should not be eaten.
4. Refrigerated smoked seafood should only be eaten when it is in a cooked dish. This includes Deli refrigerated seafood that is often labeled “nova-style”, “lox”, “kippered”, “smoked” or “jerky”. Canned or shelf-stable smoked seafood may be eaten.
5. Raw (unpasteurized) milk or any foods that contain unpasteurized milk should not be eaten.
6. Use all perishable items that are precooked or ready to eat as soon as possible.
7. Clean refrigerator regularly. If in doubt, throw it out.
8. Use a refrigerator thermometer to make sure that it stays at 40 degrees or below.



Always remember the six basic principles to help keep your food safe from harmful bacteria.

1. **CHECK**— Make sure the foods are fresh and not past “use by dates”.
2. **CLEAN**—Wash hands and surfaces often!
3. **SEPARATE**—Keep raw and cooked foods separate.
4. **COOK**—Cook to proper temperatures—use a food thermometer.
 - 145° - beef, veal, lamb (steaks, roasts and chops)
 - 160° - ground beef and fresh pork
 - 160° - egg dishes
 - 165° - ground poultry
 - 165° - stuffing and casseroles
 - 180° - whole poultry
 - CHILL - 40° or lower for safety.
5. **THROW AWAY**—when in doubt, put in trash.



For additional information contact:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention — www.cdc.gov
- USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service — www.fsis.usda.gov
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration — Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition — <http://healthfinder.gov/FindServices/Organizations/Organization.aspx?code=HR2504>
- Partnership for Food Safety Education — www.fightbac.org
- KY Food Safety Branch (502) 564-7181 or <http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/info/phps/food.htm>
- Your physician or local public health department



Cabinet for Health and Family Services
Nutrition Services Branch
275 East Main Street, HS2W-D
Frankfort, KY 40621-0001
This Institution is an equal opportunity provider
L 9.1 rev. 08/09 PAM-DHS-141

