



womenshealth.gov

1-800-994-9662

TDD: 1-888-220-5446

# Food Don'ts

## PRINT AND GO GUIDE

There are 3 main dangers lurking in the food pregnant women eat. They are:

- **Listeria** – a dangerous bacterium that can grow even in cold refrigerators.
- **Mercury** – a harmful metal found in high levels in some fish.
- **Toxoplasma** – a risky parasite found in undercooked meat and unwashed fruits and vegetables.

These things can cause serious illness or even death to you or your unborn baby.

Follow these food facts to help keep you and your baby healthy:

- **DON'T** eat **raw or undercooked meat, poultry, fish or shellfish** (sushi or sashimi).
- **DON'T** eat **swordfish, tilefish, king mackerel, and shark.**
- **DON'T** eat **refrigerated smoked seafood** like whitefish, salmon and



mackerel. These products are usually labeled “Nova-style,” lox, kippered or jerky.

- **DON'T** eat refrigerated **pâtés or meat spreads.**
- **DON'T** eat **hot dogs and luncheon meats**—unless they're reheated until steaming hot.
- **DON'T** eat **soft cheeses** like feta, brie, camembert, “blue-veined cheeses,” “queso blanco,” “queso fresco,” and Panela unless the label says they are pasteurized or made from pasteurized milk.
- **DON'T** drink **raw or unpasteurized milk** or eat foods that contain unpasteurized milk.
- **DON'T** eat **unwashed fruits and vegetables.**

SOURCE: U.S. Food and Drug Administration; Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition

Current as of January 2006