

Safer foods for people at risk:



✓ freshly cooked foods

- ✓ pasteurised dairy foods, eg,
- milk, UHT milk, yoghurt
 - hard cheese (eg, cheddar, colby, edam)
 - processed cheese, cheese spread, cottage cheese and cream cheese. Eat these cheeses cold or cooked within two days of opening the pack. Don't eat leftovers.
 - Purchase all cheese in sealed packs, in small quantities and use within the use-by date.



✓ freshly washed vegetables and fruit



- ✓ tinned foods that have just been opened
- ✓ bread and baked foods without cream or custard
- ✓ dried food
- ✓ cereals
- ✓ beverages

Unsafe foods for people at risk:



- ✗ uncooked, smoked or pre-cooked fish or seafood products that are chilled or frozen (unless reheated thoroughly and eaten hot)
- ✗ pâté
- ✗ cold pre-cooked chicken
- ✗ ham and other chilled pre-cooked meat products



✗ stored salads and coleslaw



- ✗ raw (unpasteurised) milk
- ✗ surface-ripened soft cheese (eg, brie, camembert)

MORE INFORMATION Your local public health service can give you more information on food preparation, storage and safety; talk to your doctor or nurse, or contact the NZ Food Safety Authority, www.nzfsa.govt.nz or Freephone 0800 693 721.



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FOOD SAFETY

AVOIDING LISTERIA

ESPECIALLY FOR:

- pregnant women
- the elderly and unwell



What is Listeria?

Listeria is a common bacterium which is found in soil, water, plants and in the droppings and faeces of animals and humans. Most people are exposed to it regularly, with usually no effect on healthy adults and children.

Infection with listeria is called listeriosis.

How do People get Listeriosis?

Listeriosis is a food borne infection that results from eating contaminated food. Who is at serious risk of listeriosis?

Those who:

- are pregnant
- are frail or unwell
- have long term illnesses
- have damaged immune systems.

If you are not sure about your risk of being infected, talk to your doctor.

Listeriosis is particularly dangerous for pregnant women as it can cause miscarriage or stillbirth, and can cause infection in their baby. A newborn baby may have a severe illness and may even die.

What are the Symptoms?

It takes between a few days and a few weeks for symptoms to show up. After being infected with listeria you may have no symptoms at all or you may become ill with:

- mild fever
- headache
- aches and pains.

You may also feel sick or vomit.

Some people may suffer a severe acute illness with a fever, meningitis, delirium and coma. If you think you might have listeria infection, see your doctor.

How can Listeriosis be Prevented?

The risk of serious illness from listeria infection can be reduced by safe food handling practices. Listeria is one of the few food bacteria that will grow on food even if it's in the fridge. It is wise to store any perishable food in the fridge, but it is important to use it within two days.

Safety with food

All foods should be safely handled, stored and protected from cross contamination.

- Keep cooked foods and ready to eat foods separate from raw and unprocessed foods, so there is no cross contamination.
- Eat freshly cooked food as soon as possible after cooking.
- Use cooked or prepared food, that has been stored in the fridge, within two days.
- Re-heat cooked food thoroughly so that it is 'piping hot', ie, above 70°C. Take special care to heat thoroughly when using microwave ovens.
- Wash raw fruit and vegetables thoroughly.
- Wash your hands and utensils and chopping boards before using for a different food - avoid cross contamination.