

LISTERIOSIS



FORTBEND
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

WHAT IS LISTERIOSIS?

Listeriosis is a serious infection usually caused by eating food contaminated with the bacterium *Listeria monocytogenes*.



An estimated **1,600 people** get listeriosis each year, and about 260 die.



HOW CAN YOU PREVENT GETTING LISTERIA?

Listeria is a hardy germ that can be difficult to fully remove from food processing facilities. If a facility has Listeria germs, the germs can spread to food that touches contaminated equipment or surfaces. Listeria can also spread from contaminated food to surfaces. It can even grow on foods kept in the refrigerator. The good news is that Listeria is easily killed by heating food to a high enough temperature.

The following foods should be avoided to prevent getting listeria:



Unpasteurized soft cheese
such as queso fresco and brie



Unheated cheeses sliced at a deli



Unheated deli meat, cold cuts, hot dogs, and fermented or dry sausages



Premade deli salads,
such as coleslaw and potato, tuna, or chicken salad



Refrigerated pâté or meat spreads



Refrigerated smoked fish



Raw (unpasteurized) milk, yogurt, and ice cream



Cut melon
left out for more than 2 hr. (1 hr. if it's exposed to temperatures hotter than 90°F, such as a picnic or hot car)



Cut melon in refrigerator for more than a week



WHO IS AT RISK FOR GETTING LISTERIA?

Listeria is most likely to sicken:



Pregnant women and their newborns



Adults aged 65 or older



People with weakened immune systems

Other people can be infected with Listeria, but they rarely become seriously ill.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Signs and symptoms of Listeria infection vary depending on the person infected and the part of the body affected.



FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE PREGNANT, SYMPTOMS USUALLY INCLUDE:

- Fever
- Flu-like symptoms, such as muscle aches and fatigue

Symptoms in pregnant people are usually mild. Some pregnant people never have symptoms. However, infection during pregnancy usually leads to miscarriage, stillbirth, premature delivery, or life-threatening infection of the newborn.

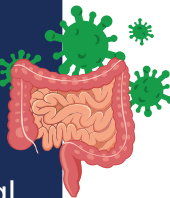


FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT PREGNANT, SYMPTOMS TYPICALLY INCLUDE:

- Fever
- Flu-like symptoms, such as muscle aches and fatigue
- Headache
- Stiff neck
- Confusion
- Loss of balance

Listeria can also cause an intestinal illness. This kind of illness is rarely diagnosed because laboratories do not regularly test patient stool samples for Listeria.

Symptoms of intestinal illness usually start within 24 hours after eating food contaminated with Listeria and usually last 1–3 days. Symptoms typically include diarrhea and vomiting.



WHAT IS THE TREATMENT FOR LISTERIOSIS?

Those who are ill are treated with antibiotics. Those who suffer from intestinal illness typically recover without antibiotic treatment. However, those who have intestinal illness should drink extra fluids while they have diarrhea.

Source: www.cdc.gov/listeria/index.html

