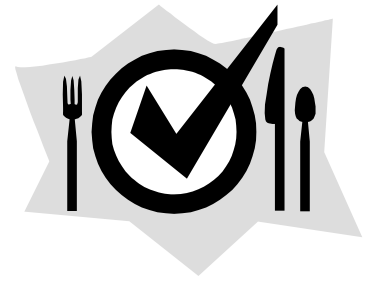

Preventing Listeriosis

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE • THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
College of Family and Consumer Sciences
and the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Cooperating



What are *Listeria* and listeriosis?

Listeria are bacteria often found in soil and water, which can cause serious illness. Illness from eating foods with *Listeria* is called listeriosis. The symptoms of listeriosis include fever and chills, and possibly nausea, vomiting, cramps, and diarrhea. Symptoms of listeriosis can also include high fever, severe headache, stiff neck and convulsions. More severe problems and possibly fatal infections (death) can result when some people get listeriosis.

Who should worry about listeriosis?



Listeriosis is not very common in healthy people, but it is always a possibility when foods are mishandled. Everyone should be concerned about foodborne illness and preventing it. However, the chances of getting listeriosis and being seriously ill, having severe complications from it, and even having a fatal infection (death) are much greater for certain types of people.

! **Pregnant women** (their risks also include miscarriages or stillbirths)

! **Newborns and Older adults**

! **People with weakened immune systems from disease**

(such as AIDS, HIV infection, diabetes, and kidney or other chronic diseases and those having cancer treatments, including chemotherapy)

Protect yourself and your family

- ! Thoroughly cook raw animal products, such as meats, fish, poultry. (See chart, over)
- ! Do not drink raw (unpasteurized) milk or any uncooked foods containing it.
- ! Thoroughly wash all food that is to be eaten raw, such as fruits and vegetables.
- ! Keep foods to be eaten raw separate from uncooked meats, fish or poultry.
- ! Wash hands and surfaces, including knives and cutting boards, with hot, soapy water in between different foods and after any contact with juices from raw meat, deli meats and hot dogs. Also wash hands thoroughly (at least 20 seconds) before beginning to handle food, during food preparation, and before eating.

Those who are at high risk (pregnant women, elderly and people with weakened immune systems) should also:

- ! Avoid all soft cheeses, including feta, Camembert, brie, Mexican-style and blue-veined cheeses (such as Roquefort). You can eat hard cheeses, processed cheeses, cream cheese, cottage cheese and yogurt.
- ! Cook hot dogs by steaming or frying until the internal temperature reaches 165°F. Cooking in a microwave is not recommended by the FDA.
- ! Avoid deli meats like salami, corned beef, bologna, and liverwurst, unless they get additional cooking before serving. (Reheat to steaming hot before eating.)

Cook Food to the Proper Temperature to Kill Bacteria

Raw Food	Internal Temperature
Ground Products	
Hamburger	160°F
Beef, veal, lamb, and pork	160°F
Chicken and turkey	165°F
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Beef, Veal, Lamb	
Roasts and Steaks	
<i>medium-rare</i>	145°F
<i>medium</i>	160°F
<i>well-done</i>	170°F
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Pork	
Chops, roasts, ribs	
<i>medium</i>	160°F
<i>well-done</i>	170°F
Ham, fresh	160°F
Sausage, fresh	160°F
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Poultry	
Chicken, whole and pieces	180°F
Duck	180°F
Turkey (<i>unstuffed</i>)	180°F
<i>Whole</i>	180°F
<i>Breast</i>	170°F
<i>Dark meat</i>	180°F
<i>Stuffing (cooked separately)</i>	165°F
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Eggs	
Fried, poached	<i>Yolk & white are firm</i>
Casseroles	160°F
Sauces, custards	160°F
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<p>This chart has been adapted from Fight BAC![™] Four Simple Steps to Food Safety. Partnership For Food Safety Education. Washington, D.C. (1998)</p>	