

[Listeria](#)

<b>Sources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unpasteurized (raw) milk and dairy products.</li><li>• Soft cheese made with unpasteurized milk, such as queso fresco, feta, Brie, Camembert.</li><li>• Raw fruits and vegetables (such as sprouts).</li><li>• Ready-to-eat deli meats and hot dogs.</li><li>• Refrigerated pâtés or meat spreads.</li><li>• Refrigerated smoked seafood.</li></ul>
<b>Incubation period</b>	Usually 1 to 4 weeks, can be as long as 70 days
<b>Symptoms</b>	<p><i>Listeria</i> can cause fever and diarrhea similar to other foodborne germs, but this type of <i>Listeria</i> infection is rarely diagnosed.</p> <p>Symptoms in people with invasive listeriosis, meaning the bacteria has spread beyond the gut, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For pregnant women: fever, fatigue and muscle aches. Pregnant women may also have no symptoms but experience fetal death, pre-term labor, or infection of the newborn.</li><li>• For all others, stiff neck, confusion, loss of balance, and convulsions in addition to fever and muscle aches.</li></ul>
<b>Duration of illness</b>	Days to weeks
<b>Who is at risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adults age 65 and older</li><li>• Pregnant women and their newborns</li><li>• People whose immune systems are weakened due to illness or medical treatment</li></ul>
<b>What to do</b>	For invasive listeriosis, antibiotics given promptly can cure the infection. In pregnant women, antibiotics are given to prevent infection in the unborn baby.
<b>Prevention</b>	Recommendations for everyone: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do not drink raw (unpasteurized) milk,</li></ul>

and do not eat soft cheeses made with it, such as queso fresco.

- Eat cut melon right away or refrigerate it.

Recommendations for people at higher risk:

- People at higher risk **should not eat** the following foods:
  - Refrigerated pâtés or meat spreads from a deli or meat counter or from the refrigerated section of a store
  - Hot dogs, cold cuts, and deli meats, unless they are heated to an internal temperature of 165°F (74°C) or until steaming hot before eating.
  - Refrigerated smoked seafood, unless it is canned or shelf-stable or it is in a cooked dish, such as a casserole
  - Raw or lightly cooked sprouts of any kind
  - Soft cheese, such as queso fresco, queso blanco, panela, brie, Camembert, blue-veined, or feta, unless labeled as made with pasteurized milk
- Be aware that Hispanic-style cheeses made from pasteurized milk, such as queso fresco, have caused Listeria infections, most likely because they were contaminated during cheese-making. Safer choices, especially for pregnant women, include cream cheese, mozzarella, and hard cheeses.

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