PREGNANT?

6 foods to *avoid* and 6 foods to *enjoy*



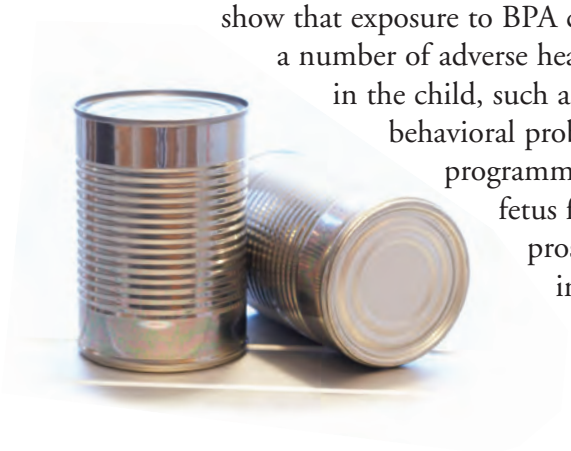
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Although obstetricians warn pregnant women ***not to drink alcohol,*** *we are learning that there are other foods that women should be careful about during those critical nine months. Below are six foods to avoid and six foods to enjoy.*

Foods to Avoid:

1. Food in cans.

Many cans are lined with Bisphenol A (BPA), which acts like a hormone in the body. Although most research has been done on animals, studies show that exposure to BPA can lead to a number of adverse health effects in the child, such as obesity, behavioral problems and programming the fetus for breast or prostate cancer in later life.



2. Fish high in mercury.

Swordfish and tuna are high in mercury because they are large and on top of the fish food chain. They should be avoided during pregnancy.



Limit your intake ***of these fish to no more than six ounces a month:*** Alaskan cod, lobster and halibut.

Fish that are lowest in mercury: clams, crab meat, flounder, haddock, oysters, herring, scallops, shrimp, sole, and trout. You will notice that fish with the lowest levels of mercury are also the smallest.

3. Raw eggs.

It's very tempting to eat the batter when baking cookies or cakes—don't do it. It's also very tempting to take a taste when making a real Caesar salad or homemade eggnog, but don't do it. Raw eggs or foods containing them have been identified as the leading cause of *Salmonella* food-borne illness in the United States today, accounting for four out of five *Salmonella enteritidis* infections in the U.S. *Salmonella* is destroyed by the heat of cooking.



4. Unpasteurized dairy products, cold cuts and hot dogs.



Pregnant women are more likely to get sick from *Listeria*-contaminated deli meats and hot dogs than are healthy women. Raw milk has not been pasteurized to kill harmful organisms that include bacteria, viruses, and parasites. Raw milk and unpasteurized cheeses should not be eaten during pregnancy.

5. Raw shellfish.



No raw fish—not just raw shellfish—should be eaten during pregnancy. The risk from eating raw clams, raw mussels and raw oysters is hepatitis. It is always difficult to trace hepatitis to its source because the disease has an incubation period of 10 to 50 days. Other health risks from eating raw shellfish include gastroenteritis and *Salmonella.*

6. Raw sprouts.

Raw sprouts like alfalfa sprouts can be a health hazard. Washing the sprouts does not help remove harmful bacteria. Raw sprouts like clover, radish and bean sprouts can lead to *Salmonella*—a disease caused by

bacteria living on the sprouts. A single sprout can contain a highly infectious dose because *Salmonella* bacteria proliferate rapidly. The disease erupts from the contaminated seeds when they're eaten. While the seeds are stored in dry conditions the bacteria remain dormant, but once the sprouts are in a warm environment, bacterial growth is activated. *E. coli* and *Salmonella* bacteria cause diarrhea, nausea, abdominal cramping, fever and other serious illnesses in pregnant women. When these bacteria are passed on by the expectant mother to the fetus, the baby may develop diarrhea, fever and meningitis after birth.



Foods to Enjoy:

1. Fruits and vegetables.

Organic food products are ideal. Avoiding pesticides during pregnancy, no matter where the exposures come from, is a good thing. Fruits and vegetables are important during pregnancy—and organic ones would be best.



2. Yogurt.



Yogurt is a good source of calcium, and when mixed with fresh fruit is a double winner. Lactose-intolerant people who may have difficulty digesting other forms of calcium often find that their bodies digest yogurt more easily.

3. Avocado.



Avocados are a good source of folic acid, which is important for fetal health. Green leafy vegetables like spinach are also important because they are vitamin-rich. One cup of broccoli contains 135% of the daily vitamin C your body needs.

4. Whole grains in breads and cereals.

Whole grain means that all three parts of the grain are used, including the fiber-rich outer layer and the nutrient-packed germ. Whole grains are important in pregnancy because they're high in both fiber and nutrients.



5. Eggs, as long as they are cooked.

One egg is only about 90 calories and yet it has 12 vitamins and minerals and contains lots of high-quality protein, which is essential for pregnancy. Lean meats are also a good source of protein.



6. Beans.



Navy beans, lentils, black beans, pinto beans, chickpeas—all are good. Beans contain the most fiber and protein of all the vegetables. Beans are the only food that represents two categories on the food pyramid—they're both a complex carbohydrate and a protein source. Black beans, in particular, have three times the amount of omega-3 fats as other beans, and their dark skin contains cancer-fighting chemicals called flavonoids.

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