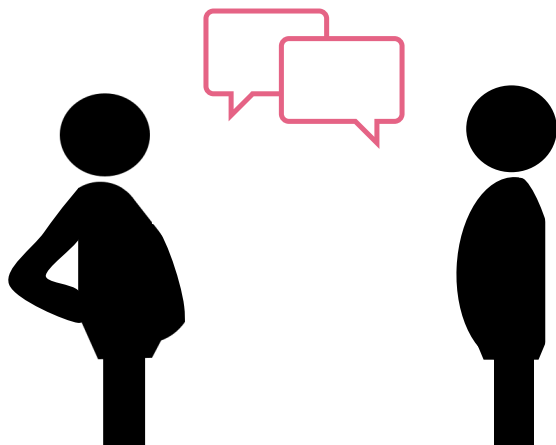


# Food Safety in Pregnancy:

## Conversation Cards

Learning through conversation



Nutrition Services  
Population and Public Health

# How to Use Conversation Cards

Use these cards to help you and your client talk about food safety in pregnancy.

## With your client:



- Explain why food safety is important in pregnancy:
  - Your immune system is weaker while you are pregnant. This makes it easier to get sick from the bacteria in certain foods.
  - Some substances are passed onto your baby through the placenta.
- Briefly show your client the **menu of cards**.
- Have your **client choose** which card(s) they want to learn about.
- **Click** on the chosen card and use the information provided to guide your discussion.
- To return to the Menu of Cards, click on the **home** button.
- If your clients wants more information, click on the **information icon** to go to the Resources card.



# Menu of Cards

What would you like to talk about today?



Caffeine



Tea



Sugar  
Substitutes



Deli Meats &  
Wieners



Cheese



Raw Meat,  
Fish, Shellfish,  
& Eggs



Mercury in  
Fish



Sprouts &  
Unpasteurized  
Juice



Preparing  
Food Safely

# Resources

For more information, scan the QR code or visit:



**Environmental Public Health**  
[ahs.ca/EPH](https://ahs.ca/EPH)



**Healthy Parents, Healthy Children:**  
Healthy Eating and Food Safety  
[healthyparentshealthychildren.ca](https://healthyparentshealthychildren.ca)



**Healthy Parents, Healthy Children:**  
Eating and Food Safety during Pregnancy  
[healthyparentshealthychildren.ca](https://healthyparentshealthychildren.ca)



**Nutrition Handouts**  
[ahs.ca/NutritionHandouts](https://ahs.ca/NutritionHandouts)



**Nutrition Guidelines**  
[ahs.ca/NutritionGuidelinesHP](https://ahs.ca/NutritionGuidelinesHP)



**Should I Eat This Fish:**  
Fish caught in Alberta lakes and rivers  
[aepin.alberta.ca/ShouldIEatThisFish/](https://aepin.alberta.ca/ShouldIEatThisFish/)



# Caffeine



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# Caffeine

Too much caffeine can harm your baby.

Aim for **300 mg or less of caffeine daily** from **all** foods and drinks.

Examples of 300 mg caffeine include:

- 6 cups (1500 mL) of black or green tea
  - 2 cups (500 mL) coffee
- or



Energy drinks are **not recommended** in pregnancy because of caffeine and other ingredients.





# Tea



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# Tea

You can safely drink up to **3 cups** (750 mL) of these **herbal teas** per day:



Ginger root



Peppermint



Orange peel



Rose hip

Black and green teas without herbs are **safe**.  
These teas have **caffeine**.

See the Caffeine card for more information.

**×** Other herbal teas may be unsafe.





# Sugar Substitutes



**Nutrition Services  
Population and Public Health**

# Sugar Substitutes

Sugar substitutes are found in food and drinks, like:



Sweetener packages



Diet pop



"No Sugar Added" candy & syrup

Most sugar substitutes are safe during pregnancy, such as:

✓ Aspartame

✓ Sucralose

✓ Xylitol, sorbitol, mannitol, and other sugar alcohols

✓ Stevia

✓ Acesulfame-K



Limit SWEET'N LOW® and Sugar Twin® to **2 packages daily** as their safety is unknown.





# Deli Meats & Wieners



**Nutrition Services**  
**Population and Public Health**

# Deli Meats & Wieners

Wieners or 'hot dogs' and some deli meats may have harmful bacteria. This may make you sick and could harm your baby.

**Heat** packaged and store-sliced deli meats **until steaming hot** to make them safe to eat.



It is **safe** to eat **dried** and **salted** deli meats without heating, like:



salami



pepperoni



# Cheese



**Nutrition Services  
Population and Public Health**

# Cheese

Cheese may have harmful bacteria. This may make you sick and could harm your baby.

✓ Hard **pasteurized** cheeses and processed cheeses are safe to eat.  
Examples:



Cheddar



Gouda



Swiss



Parmesan



Cottage  
cheese



Cheese  
slices



Heat soft **pasteurized** cheeses **until they steam**. These include:



- Brie
- Feta
- Queso Fresco
- Havarti
- Goat
- Paneer
- Gorgonzola
- Mozzarella



Avoid all **unpasteurized** cheese.





# Raw Meat, Fish, Shellfish, & Eggs



**Nutrition Services  
Population and Public Health**

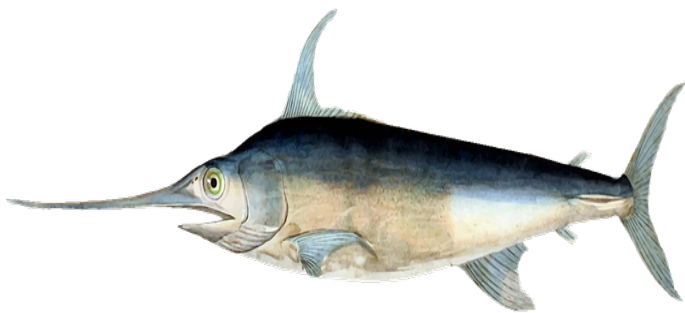
# Raw Meat, Fish, Shellfish, & Eggs

Some raw, smoked, or lightly cooked foods can have harmful bacteria. This may make you sick and could harm your baby.

**Cook these foods well.**







# Mercury in Fish



**Nutrition Services  
Population and Public Health**

# Mercury in Fish



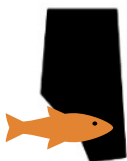
Most fish and shellfish have safe amounts of mercury.

They are **safe** to eat when you are pregnant.



Avoid these fish while you are pregnant:

- Escolar
- Canned 'white' tuna
- Marlin
- Fresh or frozen tuna
- Shark
- Orange roughy
- Swordfish



Limit or avoid some fish caught in Alberta lakes or rivers.

For more information, see the 'Resources' card.





# Sprouts & Unpasteurized Juice



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# Sprouts & Unpasteurized Juice

Sprouts and unpasteurized drinks may have harmful bacteria. This may make you sick and could harm your baby.



Choose fruit and vegetable juices and ciders with the word **"pasteurized"** on the label.



Avoid eating sprouts, such as:



Alfalfa  
sprouts



Bean sprouts  
(Mung bean)



Radish  
sprouts

**Cooking does not make sprouts safer.**





# Preparing Food Safely



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# Preparing Food Safely

## 1. Clean

- Wash your hands.
- Rinse vegetables/fruits well with safe drinkable water.
- Use clean cutting boards, dishes, and counters.



## 2. Separate

- Keep raw meat separate from other foods.



## 3. Cook

- Defrost frozen foods in the fridge or microwave and cook them right away.
- Do not defrost meat on the counter.
- Cook foods to the right temperature to kill bacteria that can make you sick.



## 4. Chill

- Keep cold foods cold.
- Put leftovers in the fridge **within 2 hours** of being cooked.



## Food Safety in Pregnancy: Virtual Conversation Cards (May 2023)

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