

POISONology

SAFETY & FIRST AID TIPS FROM THE ARIZONA POISON AND DRUG INFORMATION CENTER

Foods & drinks to think about in pregnancy

This special article was written by the experts at the MotherToBaby Arizona, a free and confidential statewide public service that provides up-to-date information to callers about possible effects exposures may have during pregnancy or breastfeeding. Call 1-888-285-3410 or visit us at

<http://azpoison.com/pregnancy-riskline>.

During pregnancy, it's important to eat a healthy, balanced diet. Below are some tips on food and drink you might want to reconsider while celebrating the holidays during pregnancy:

- **Alcohol:** There is no known safe amount of alcohol in pregnancy. Drinking alcohol increases the risk of miscarriage, stillbirth, birth defects, learning and behavior problems. Some popular food and drinks like rum balls and eggnog can contain alcohol, so be careful and know the ingredients before eating or drinking.
- **Soft cheeses:** Soft cheeses (such as Panela, Cotija, Queso Fresco, blue-veined cheeses, Brie, Feta, and Camembert) and raw (unpasteurized) milk products can contain the bacteria *listeria monocytogenes*. This bacteria can cause listeriosis, which may increase the risk of miscarriage, stillbirth, uterine infection, or premature labor. Many women choose to avoid soft cheeses during pregnancy.
- **Lunch meats:** Hot dogs and luncheon meats are also places bacteria like to hang out. Make sure to reheat them until they are steaming hot before eating.
- **Pate/smoked seafood:** Refrigerated pates or meat spreads can may contain harmful bacteria that can cause food poisoning. Make sure these ingredients are in a cooked dish, like a casserole.
- **Imported candies:** Lead has been found in some candies and wrappers that have come from outside the U.S. To be safe, stick to non-imported candies.
- **Undercooked meat, poultry, eggs and fish:** Food poisoning can occur in any type of protein from an animal source. Make sure meat, poultry, eggs and fish are cooked at the correct temperature for the correct amount of time.
- **Fish:** All fish contains mercury – it just depends on how much. The recommendation for eating fish during pregnancy is no more than 12 oz. (about 2 meals) per week. Many commonly eaten fish (salmon, shrimp, pollock, light canned tuna, tilapia, catfish and cod) are lower in mercury. Tilefish from the Gulf of Mexico, shark, swordfish, and king mackerel are highest in mercury and should be avoided in pregnancy. White albacore tuna should be limited to 6 oz. (about 1 meal) per week.

