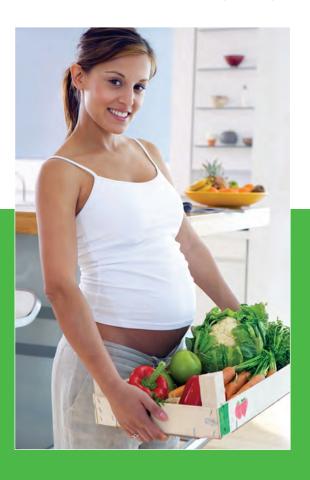
PREGNANT?

6 foods to avoid and 6 foods to evijou





Environment & Human Health, Inc.

1191 Ridge Road North Haven, Connecticut 06473 Phone (203) 248-6582 Fax (203) 288-7571 www.ehhi.org 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.

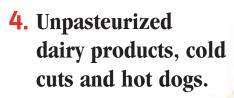
Limit your intake of these fish to no more than six ounces a month: Alaskan cod, lobster and halibut.

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.



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.

EHHI BOARD MEMBERS

- **Susan S. Addiss, MPH, MUrS.** Past Commissioner of Health for the State of Connecticut; Past President of the American Public Health Association; Past member of the Pew Environmental Health Commission.
- Nancy O. Alderman, MES. President of Environment and Human Health, Inc.; Past member of the National Board of Environmental Defense; Recipient of the CT Bar Association, Environmental Law Section's, Clyde Fisher Award and the New England Public Health Association's Robert C. Huestis/Eric Mood Award.
- **Andrea Gottsegen Asnes, MD, MSW.** Associate Professor of Pediatrics at the Yale School of Medicine; Associate Director of the Yale Child Abuse Programs and Child Abuse Prevention Programs.
- **D. Barry Boyd, M.D.** Clinical Professor of Medicine, Yale University School of Medicine; Oncologist at Greenwich Hospital and Affiliate Member of the Yale Cancer Center.
- **Russell L. Brenneman, Esq.** Connecticut Environmental Lawyer; Co-Chair of the Connecticut League of Conservation; Former chair of the Connecticut Energy Advisory Board; Co-Chair of the Connecticut Greenways Committee.
- **David R. Brown, Sc.D.** Public Health Toxicologist and Director of Public Health Toxicology for Environment and Human Health, Inc.; Past Chief of Environmental Epidemiology and Occupational Health at Connecticut's Department of Health; Past Deputy Director of The Public Health Practice Group of ATSDR at the National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- **Thomas F. Harrison, Esq.** Connecticut Environmental Lawyer; Past Assistant Attorney General in the New York State's Attorney General's office; Past Regional Counsel in the largest U.S. EPA Office, Region 5; Past Senior Corporate Council to the B.F. Goodrich Company; Past Partner at the Hartford law firm of Day Pitney LLP.
- **Pinar H. Kodaman, MD, PhD.** Assistant Professor of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Sciences, Division of Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility, Yale University School of Medicine; Director of the Early Recurrent Pregnancy Loss Program at the Yale Fertility Center.
- **Robert G. LaCamera, M.D.** Clinical Professor of Pediatrics, Yale University School of Medicine; Primary Care Pediatrician in New Haven, Connecticut from 1956 to 1996 with a sub-specialty in children with disabilities.
- **Hugh S. Taylor, M.D.** Anita O'Keeffe Young Professor and Chair of the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences and Department of Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology, Yale University School of Medicine; Chief of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Yale-New Haven Hospital.
- **John P. Wargo**, **Ph.D.** Tweedy Ordway Professor of Environmental Health and Politics, Yale University's School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, and Professor of Political Science. Author of both *Green Intelligence* and *Our Children's Toxic Legacy*.

This brochure was made possible, in part, by the Connecticut Health Foundation.