

FACT SHEET

LISTERIA MONOCYTOGENES

Listeria Monocytogenes is a bacteria that can be present in raw milk, foods made from raw milk and a variety of processed meats. Unlike many other germs, Listeria can grow even in the cold temperature of the refrigerator. Listeria is killed by cooking and pasteurization.

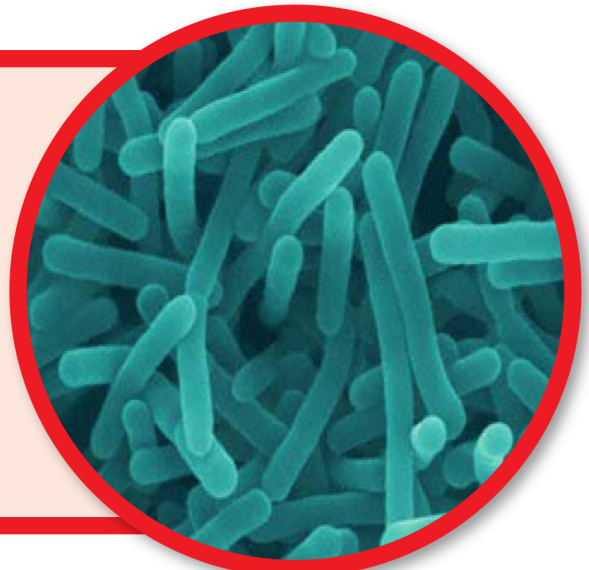
SOURCES: Ready-to-eat deli meats and hot dogs; refrigerated pâtés or meat spreads; unpasteurized (raw) milk and dairy products; soft, unpasteurized cheeses (e.g., queso fresco, Feta, Brie, Camembert); refrigerated smoked seafood; raw sprouts

INCUBATION PERIOD: 3-70 days

SYMPTOMS: Fever, stiff neck, confusion, weakness, vomiting, sometimes preceded by diarrhea

DURATION: Days to weeks

WHAT DO I DO?: If you are very ill with fever or stiff neck, consult your doctor immediately. Antibiotics given promptly can cure the infection.



Simple food handling practices can help prevent *Listeria Monocytogenes* infections:

- Rinse raw produce, such as fruits and vegetables, thoroughly under running tap water before eating, cutting, or cooking. Even if the produce will be peeled, it should still be washed first.
- Scrub firm produce, such as melons and cucumbers, with a clean produce brush.
- Dry the produce with a clean cloth or paper towel.
- Separate uncooked meats and poultry from vegetables, cooked foods, and ready-to-eat foods.
- Wash hands, knives, countertops, and cutting boards after handling and preparing uncooked foods.
- Keep refrigerators 40°F or lower and freezers 0°F or lower.
- Clean up all spills in your refrigerator right away – especially juices from hot dog and lunch meat packages, raw meat, and raw poultry.
- Clean the inside walls and shelves of your refrigerator with hot water and liquid soap, then rinse.
- Cook meat and poultry thoroughly to a safe internal temperature.