



Now that you're eating for two, you may already be a lot more mindful of eating a wholesome diet that'll help and support both you and your growing baby throughout your pregnancy. However, it's also important to be wary of certain foods that consist of illness-causing bacteria. Thankfully, knowing what's safe to consume and what's not is pretty straightforward. The only tricky part is eliminating the foods you crave and love to eat regularly.

While your doctor may have already given you the lowdown on what to eat and what not to eat, here's a quick list you can pin to your fridge; along with a reminder as to why you shouldn't eat these foods and what to do if you accidentally give in to a craving and eat the forbidden food(s).

Why you should avoid certain foods during pregnancy.

So, the thought of eliminating some of your favourite foods and beverages from your diet when you're pregnant may seem like an unsavoury thought, but here's why it's important.

Certain foods have a high risk of harbouring harmful bacteria such as E. coli, Salmonella and Listeria. During pregnancy, your body is already working twice as hard and doesn't have the fight to battle off these germs. Therefore, consuming foods that pose a high risk of carrying such bacteria may lead to you suffering from sickness and/or suffer complications such as a miscarriage or a premature delivery.

These germs can not only be harmful to you and impact your pregnancy, but they are also very harmful to your baby. Your baby's immune system has not yet reached the stage where it can fight off germs. Therefore, he/she would be at a greater risk of developing a serious infection or even a birth defect.

Foods to avoid during pregnancy.

Undercooked or raw fish.

Sorry Sushi fans! Raw fish, especially shellfish, can cause several infections such as norovirus, Vibrio, Salmonella, and Listeria.

Fish high in mercury.

Most high-mercury fish are generally found in polluted waters and therefore, in large amounts, can be toxic to your nervous system, immune system, and kidneys. These include the following amongst others.

- Tuna
- Swordfish
- King Mackerel
- Marlin

When it comes to consuming fish, it is important to remember that while certain fish and raw seafood is off-limits, fatty fish such as salmon and anchovies are high in omega-3 fatty acids which are vital for your baby's development and therefore great to include in your diet, as long they are well-cooked.

Undercooked, raw, processed meat.

Bacteria can be found on the surface of the meat and within the muscle fibres. So now is a good time to say no to rare, pink looking meat on the plate, and opt for something well-done. Hot dogs, deli meats, and pates are also off-limits.

Raw eggs.

Raw eggs can be contaminated with Salmonella. So, say bye-bye to the sunny-side-up and dippy eggs for now and say hello to the fully cooked eggs!

Unpasteurised milk, cheese, and fruit juice.

Sorry soft cheese lovers! But raw milk, unpasteurised cheese and juices can contain an array of harmful bacteria that can have life-threatening consequences for an unborn baby. Instead, to curb the cheese craving reach for hard cheeses such as cheddar, parmesan, and stilton.

Raw sprouts.

If you're reaching for a healthy salad for lunch, avoid the one containing the raw sprouts; it may be contaminated with Salmonella. If you love your sprouts, we suggest you thoroughly cook them before consuming them.

Other food and beverage safety advice.

- Always thoroughly wash your fruits and vegetables before consuming them.
- As mentioned, always thoroughly cook your food.
- Reduce your caffeine intake.
- Avoid alcohol intake.
- Say no to energy drinks. These contain high levels of caffeine.

What to do if you accidentally eat one of these foods.

Accidentally eaten something you shouldn't have? It happens sometimes. If you start to experience stomach pains, vomiting, diarrhea, or flu-like symptoms, call your doctor immediately. If you feel fine, but are concerned, call your doctor anyway, it's good to get some reassurance.

Book your appointment.

If you have just found out that you are embarking on the journey of motherhood, give our team a call on 02 4225 1999 to book an appointment with **Dr Kothari**.

Dr Kothari is dedicated to developing a trusting and supportive relationship with all his patients to ensure a safe and successful pregnancy and delivery. Our experienced team is here to support and help you every step of the way on this incredible journey.