

Food Safety

HELPFUL HINTS FROM EXPERTS

Raw Milk Can Pose A Serious Health Risk

(NAPSA)—The U.S. Food and Drug Administration reminds you that while milk and milk products provide many nutritional benefits, they can pose serious health risks if they are not pasteurized.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 800 people in the U.S. have gotten sick from drinking raw milk or eating cheese made from raw milk since 1998.

Raw milk is milk from cows, sheep or goats that has not been pasteurized to kill harmful bacteria. This raw, unpasteurized milk can seriously affect the health of anyone who drinks it or eats foods made from it. The bacteria in milk can be especially dangerous to pregnant women, children, the elderly and people with weakened immune systems.

What Is Pasteurization?

Pasteurization is a process that kills harmful bacteria by heating milk to a specific temperature for a set period of time. First developed by Louis Pasteur in 1864, pasteurization kills harmful organisms for diseases such as listeriosis, typhoid fever, tuberculosis, diphtheria and brucellosis.

There is no difference in the nutritional values of pasteurized and unpasteurized milk. Pasteurized milk contains low levels of the bacteria that cause food spoilage, so you should still refrigerate it.

Symptoms and Advice

Symptoms of foodborne illness include:

- Vomiting, diarrhea and abdominal pain
- Flulike symptoms such as



To avoid getting sick from the dangerous bacteria found in raw milk, you should choose pasteurized milk and milk products.

fever, headache and body ache.

While most healthy people will recover from an illness caused by harmful bacteria in raw milk—or foods made with raw milk—within a short period of time, some can develop symptoms that are chronic, severe or even life threatening.

If you or someone you know becomes ill after consuming raw milk or products made from raw milk—or if you are pregnant and think you have consumed contaminated raw milk or cheese—see a doctor or health care provider immediately. If you are pregnant, consuming raw milk or foods made from raw milk can harm your baby even if you don't feel sick.

To protect yourself and your family:

- Read the label.
- Ask your grocer or store clerk whether a product is pasteurized.
- Don't buy anything at a farm stand or farmer's market unless you can confirm it is pasteurized.

For more information, visit www.cfsan.fda.gov.