

Foods to Avoid (and What's Overblown)



Real risks come down to food poisoning — heat kills most of the worry.



Alcohol is the one consistent “no.” Everything else is a conversation.



The internet's list is longer than the actual one.

Real food risks (limit or avoid)

- ▶ Raw or undercooked seafood (listeria, parasites, hepatitis A risk).
- ▶ Raw or undercooked meat or eggs (toxoplasmosis, salmonella, listeria).
- ▶ High-mercury fish: swordfish, king mackerel, tilefish, shark, bigeye tuna.
- ▶ Unpasteurized dairy and juice. Cold deli meat unless heated to steaming.

Why these specifically

- ▶ Listeria can cause miscarriage, stillbirth, or severe newborn infection. Pregnant women are 10x more susceptible.
- ▶ Toxoplasmosis can cause birth defects when transmitted across the placenta.
- ▶ Mercury accumulates in the fetal brain and can affect neurological development.
- ▶ Heat kills most of these pathogens. Properly cooked is fine.

What's more overblown than it sounds

- ▶ Caffeine up to 200 mg per day is considered safe. Coffee, tea, chocolate are fine in moderation.
- ▶ Sushi from reliable, high-turnover sources or cooked sushi is generally fine — talk it through with your provider.
- ▶ Soft cheeses if pasteurized (most US cheeses are). Read labels.
- ▶ Cured meats are debated; the risk is small but conservatively listed.

Gaux Note

Alcohol is the one consistent “no.” Most other restrictions are about food safety. Decide your own risk tolerance and always talk with your provider about specifics.