

WSGW RADIO PRESENTATION

Raw (Unpasteurized) Milk Food Safety Concerns

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There are potential health risks associated with consuming unpasteurized milk or unpasteurized milk products, commonly referred to as raw milk or raw milk products.

Raw milk is a product that has not been treated to kill bacteria that can cause illness.

Raw milk is milk from cows, sheep, or goats that has not been pasteurized to kill harmful bacteria. This raw, unpasteurized milk can carry dangerous bacteria such as *Salmonella*, *E. coli*, *Campylobacter* and *Listeria*, which are responsible for causing numerous foodborne illnesses.

Types of unsafe products to eat would include:

- Unpasteurized milk or cream
- Soft cheeses, such as Brie and Camembert, and Mexican-style soft cheeses such as Queso Fresco, Panela, Asadero, and Queso Blanco made from unpasteurized milk
- Yogurt made from unpasteurized milk
- Pudding made from unpasteurized milk
- Ice cream or frozen yogurt made from unpasteurized milk

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 responsible for such diseases as listeriosis, typhoid fever, tuberculosis, diphtheria, and brucellosis.

Research shows no meaningful difference in the nutritional values of pasteurized and unpasteurized milk. Pasteurized milk contains low levels of the type of nonpathogenic bacteria that can cause food spoilage, so storing your pasteurized milk in the refrigerator is still important.

These harmful bacteria can seriously affect the health of anyone who drinks raw milk, or eats foods made from raw milk. However, the bacteria in raw milk can be especially dangerous to **pregnant women, children, the elderly, and people with weakened immune systems.**

Myths and facts about milk and pasteurization:

- Raw milk DOES NOT kill dangerous pathogens by itself
- Pasteurizing milk DOES NOT cause lactose intolerance and allergic reactions. Both raw milk and pasteurized milk can cause allergic reactions in people sensitive to milk proteins.
- Pasteurization DOES NOT reduce milk's nutritional value.
- Pasteurization DOES NOT mean that it is safe to leave milk out of the refrigerator for extended time, particularly after it has been opened.
- Pasteurization DOES kill harmful bacteria.
- Pasteurization DOES save lives.

Don't buy milk or milk products at farm stands or farmers' markets **unless you can confirm** that it has been pasteurized.

www.saginawpublichealth.org

Source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration (www.fda.gov)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (www.foodsafety.gov)