

Raw Milk Facts



Raw milk has been recognized as a source of disease for over 100 years.

Pasteurization is the only way to ensure that milk and milk products do not contain harmful bacteria. Unlike sterilization, pasteurization is not intended to kill all micro-organisms in the food but to remove the number of pathogens to prevent disease. Routine pasteurization became widespread in the United States by 1950 and this led to dramatic reductions in diseases previously associated with milk.

Pasteurization is recommended for all animal milk consumed by humans by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Practitioners, the American Veterinary Medical Association, the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians, and many other medical and scientific organizations.

Pasteurization is accomplished by heating milk to 161° F for 15 seconds or to 145° F for 30 minutes, then cooling and pouring the milk into sterile jars. Pasteurization kills disease-causing bacteria.

The Risks

Unpasteurized milk can contain bacteria such as E. coli, Campylobacter, Listeria and Salmonella. While some people exposed to these bacteria do not develop any symptoms, others may develop short term nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fever, and cramps. Illnesses can last a week or longer, and some people even develop severe, long-term consequences resulting in kidney failure or paralysis. These infections can be particularly serious in those who are very young, very old, or who have impaired immune systems. They can even be fatal.

Over the past two years, the Alaska Section of Epidemiology has investigated two Campylobacter outbreaks associated with drinking raw milk from Alaska farms. In 2011, an outbreak sickened at least

18 individuals, and in 2013 another outbreak sickened more than 30 individuals, accounting for two hospitalizations and four cases of prolonged reactive arthritis (three of which were in children). During these investigations *Listeria*, another food borne pathogen, was found in the raw milk from both farms.

For more information on raw milk investigations in Alaska:

Press release: Alaska outbreak of *Campylobacter* illnesses traced to raw milk

http://dhss.alaska.gov/News/Documents/press/2013/Campyoutbreak_PR_02152013.pdf

Update: *Campylobacter* Outbreak Associated with Consumption of Raw Milk (fact sheet) January – February 2013

http://www.epi.alaska.gov/phan/AKPHAN_20130222_CampyOutbreakRawMilkUpdate.pdf

For more information on raw milk:

CDC: Food Safety and Raw Milk

- <http://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/rawmilk/raw-milk-index.html>
 - <http://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/rawmilk/raw-milk-videos.html>
 - <http://www2c.cdc.gov/podcasts/player.asp?f=8622941>
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FDA: Consumer Information About Milk Safety

- <http://www.fda.gov/Food/PopularTopics/ucm293042.htm>
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Food Safety and Home Pasteurization

- <http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/types/milk/index.html>
 - http://pubstorage.sdstate.edu/AgBio_Publications/articles/ExEx14054.pdf
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Real Raw Milk Facts

- <http://www.realrawmilkfacts.com/>



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