

# Fact Sheet

## Listeriosis

### What is listeriosis?

Listeriosis is a serious illness caused by eating food that has the bacteria *Listeria monocytogenes*. *Listeria* can be found in a variety of raw foods, such as meats and vegetables. It is also found in prepackaged meats, such as hot dogs and deli meats, and some cheeses.

### What are the symptoms?

Symptoms can start from 2 to 70 days after eating the food and may include:

- Fever.
- Muscle aches.
- Nausea/throwing up.
- Diarrhea or constipation.
- Stomach pain.
- Stiff neck.
- Bad headache.

### Who can get it?

Healthy adults and children may accidentally eat foods with *Listeria* and not get sick. However, some people can get listeriosis after eating food with even a few bacteria and include:

- Pregnant women.
- Babies.
- Elders.
- Adults already sick or on some medicines.

### What is the treatment for it?

See your healthcare provider to determine if medicine is needed.

### How can it be prevented?

- Thoroughly cook meat bought from stores, such as beef, pork, or chicken.
- Wash raw vegetables and fruit before eating.
- Keep raw meats separate from vegetables and from cooked foods.
- Avoid raw (unpasteurized) milk or foods made from raw milk.
- Wash hands, knives/ulus, and cutting boards after handling raw foods.

Also, pregnant women and persons with other illnesses should:

- Avoid soft cheeses such as brie, camembert, and feta cheese.
- Cook hot dogs until very hot before eating.
- Avoid pre-packaged deli meat or chicken and turkey meats.
- Eat all foods that are already cooked or ready-to-eat before the date of expiry.