



Raw milk, juice dangerous for children and infants

Drinking milk and juice can be a tasty way for children to get vitamins and nutrients. But giving your child unpasteurized or raw juice, milk or dairy products can lead to potentially serious illness or even death due to the harmful bacteria and parasites these products may contain.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that infants drink only breast milk or infant formula that has been prepared correctly until age 4 to 6 months. The AAP also warns of the serious risks raw milk and juice can pose and strongly recommends pasteurized milk or juice once your child is ready for other foods. These products have been heated to kill bacteria and parasites, such as harmful *E. coli* or *Salmonella*, often found in raw beverages.

According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), 98% of juice sold in the United States is pasteurized, and juice and dairy beverages that have not been pasteurized are required to bear a label that says so.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the FDA Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition offer the following safety tips:

Fruits, vegetables and juices

- Rinse all raw fruits and vegetables thoroughly before eating or cooking them. Even produce with a peel or rind can become contaminated with bacteria when cutting or peeling it.
- Try to remove bruised or cut areas on fruits or vegetables, where bacteria can thrive.
- Use a vegetable brush to remove any visible surface dirt from produce.
- Always refrigerate pasteurized juice.
- Never give infants, children or adolescents unpasteurized juice unless the fruit is washed and freshly squeezed just before drinking.
- Be sure that any juice you purchase does not contain a label stating the product is unpasteurized. If it is unclear whether juice has been pasteurized, do not let your child drink it.
- Consumers of any age should never eat raw bean sprouts. They may have bacteria that are nearly impossible to remove or destroy, even by heating or thoroughly washing the sprouts.

Milk and dairy products

- Always refrigerate milk and dairy products.

- Children, the elderly, pregnant women and those with weakened immune systems should never drink raw milk or consume products made from raw milk, such as cheese or yogurt.
- Discard any milk or dairy products that have been unrefrigerated for more than two hours.

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January 2008 American Academy of Pediatrics