

Foodstuffs to Avoid with Children in Early Infancy

- Vegetables that retain nitrates: spinach, nettles, beetroot, various lettuces (including rocket salad), Chinese cabbage, kale (leaf cabbage), kohlrabi (turnip cabbage), pumpkin (all pumpkin types excluding zucchini), radish, celery, fennel, fresh herbs, sprouts, root-vegetable juices. Large amounts of nitrate may lead to impaired oxygen delivery in the body of a small child. Furthermore, raw beetroot consumption carries the risk of food poisoning.
- Foreign frozen berries. Risk of Noro virus and Hepatitis-A virus. Must be heated before use at 90 °C for five minutes or boiled for 2 minutes.
- New potatoes. High levels of solanine and/or nitrate.
- Green, sprouted or damaged potatoes. High solanine content (natural toxin).
- Unripe tomatoes. High tomatine content (natural toxin).
- Sprouts. Risk of EHEC and Salmonella bacteria when not heated. Can be used when heated.
- Mushrooms. Some mushrooms contain natural toxins. Edibility must be verified, and the mushrooms must be prepared according to species.
- Morel mushrooms. Despite processing, contain morel-mushroom toxic residues.
- Raw-grain and raw-seed porridges that have been prepared by soaking. The level of product hygiene may be poor.
- Raw fish, fish in vacuum or modified atmosphere packages, and salt cured fish or cold-smoked at home. Risk of Listeria bacteria. Can only be consumed after being heated to 70 °C.
- Foods containing roe or raw fish, such as sushi and pâtés. Risk of Listeria bacteria.
- Sausages, hot dog sausages and deli meats. Large amounts of nitrite may have adverse effects on oxygen delivery in the body of a small child. They also contain saturated fats and salt.
- Liver, liver dishes, liver sausage and liver pâtés. High Vitamin A content. Excess consumption may result malfunctions of liver and metabolism.
- Raw meat, raw minced meat and steak tartare. Risk of infection, e.g. EHEC bacteria, Salmonella and Yersinia.
- Poultry. Risk of Salmonella and Campylobacter infections. Serve only when cooked thoroughly, inside temperature must be more than 75 °C.
- Raw milk and unpasteurised milk. Bacteria risks. Must be used as quickly as possible and only after being heated.
- Cheeses made from unpasteurised milk. Risks of pathogenic organisms.
- Coffee, caffeinated drinks (e.g. colas) as well as products that contain added caffeine. May cause palpitations and insomnia even when consumed in small quantities.
- Herbal-tea beverages. May contain naturally-occurring harmful substances.
- Wheatgrass juice, lactic acid fermented juices. The level of product hygiene may be poor.
- Cocoa and cocoa beverages. Contain tannin, which interferes with iron and zinc absorption.
- Rice beverages. The nutrient content does not meet the child's needs. High level of arsenic.
- Food products that contain benzoic acid or benzoates as additives: e.g. juice beverages. The safe daily intake must not be exceeded.
- Honey. Risk of botulism.
- Oilseeds (e.g. flaxseeds, pine nuts, chia seeds, hemp seeds, sesame seeds, pumpkin seeds, poppy seeds and sunflower seeds) should not be used. High nickel and cadmium content.
- Apricot kernels. High amygdalin content (natural toxin). Pose a risk of cyanide poisoning.
- Cinnamon (Cassia cinnamon). High coumarin content (natural toxin). Ceylon cinnamon has a much lower coumarin content.
- Seaweed products. Some have high iodine content or high heavy-metal content.
- Herbal products that are sold as dietary supplements. May contain naturally-occurring harmful substances.
 - Source: Eating together – food recommendations for families with children. The National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), and the National Nutrition Council 2019.
 - See www.ruokavirasto.fi for the latest version of the Finnish Food Safety Authority (Ruokavirasto) instructions for safe use of foodstuffs (Table)