

PASTEURIZATION

What Is Pasteurized Milk?

Raw milk is obtained directly from a cow, sheep or goat. Pasteurized milk is raw milk that has been heated to at least 72° Celsius (162°F) and held at that temperature for at least 16 seconds before cooling or heated to 63° Celsius (145°F) for at least 30 minutes before cooling.

Why Pasteurize Milk?

Raw milk may contain disease-causing organisms (pathogens). Raw milk is pasteurized to kill most organisms that can cause illness. Pasteurized milk must also be kept refrigerated to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria that are not destroyed by pasteurization (spore formers).

Has Raw Milk Made People Sick?

Yes! In Canada during 1983 and 1984 there were more than two hundred and seventy-five individuals who were reported ill from drinking raw milk. The following major outbreaks have also been documented:

- 80 people were infected by *Campylobacter jejuni* in Vercheres, Canada (1983)
- more than 500 people became ill from *Salmonella typhimurium* in Australia (1976).
- more than 190 individuals were infected with *Salmonella dublin* in Scotland (1981).

- 138 people were infected with *Yersinia enterocolitica* in Montreal, Canada (1975).
- 30 people became ill with 'hamburger disease' after drinking raw milk in Ontario, Canada (1986).
- 5 children were infected with "hamburger disease" after drinking raw goats milk in Nanaimo, British Columbia (2001). Two of the five infected children were hospitalized and developed hemolytic uremic syndrome, which can result in kidney failure and death.

Who Is Most Likely To Get Sick?

The very young, the elderly and individuals that have been weakened by other diseases are most likely to get sick from drinking raw milk. Coincidentally, these individuals are most likely to consume milk.

Is It Legal To Sell Raw Milk?

Raw milk cannot be legally sold to consumers in Canada. As such, raw milk is shipped to dairy processing plants where the milk is pasteurized.

For further information contact the Dairy Plant Specialist at Food Protection Services

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