

UNPASTEURIZED CIDER AND JUICE



Most of the juices sold in the United States are processed (for example, “pasteurized”) to kill harmful bacteria. However, when fruits and vegetables are fresh squeezed and left untreated, harmful bacteria from the inside or the outside of the produce can become a part of the finished product. Even though sickness due to unpasteurized juice is rare, high risk groups, including people with weakened immune systems, children and older adults should only consume pasteurized juices. The symptoms commonly associated with food poisoning in these individuals include diarrhea, abdominal pain, cramping, vomiting, fever and headache. If you should have any of these symptoms, contact your physician immediately.

Here are some ways you can make sure the juice you drink is safe:

- Some grocery stores, health food stores, cider mills and farmer’s markets sell packages and containers of juice that were made on site and **have not been pasteurized** or otherwise treated to kill harmful bacteria. These untreated products should be kept in the refrigeration section of the store, or on ice, and **must** have the following warning on the label.

WARNING: This product has not been pasteurized and therefore may contain harmful bacteria that can cause serious illness in children, the elderly, and persons with weakened immune systems.

- Juices that are fresh squeezed and sold by the glass, such as at farmer’s markets, roadside stands, or in some restaurants or juice bars may not be pasteurized or otherwise treated to ensure safety. Warning labels are not required for these products.

Parents of children in day-care centers and schools that serve cider and juice should ask if the products are pasteurized. Children on field trips to apple cider mills or farmer’s markets should not drink unpasteurized cider.

If you or someone in your family is in a high-risk group and you cannot determine if a juice product has been processed to destroy harmful bacteria, either don’t drink it or bring it to a boil to kill any harmful bacteria that might be present.

References

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- US. Food and Drug Administration. Safe Handling of Raw Produce and Fresh Squeezed Fruit and Vegetable Juices. <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/prodsafe.html> November 2005
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