

# Guidelines issued for managing listeriosis in pregnancy

August 8 2014

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(HealthDay)—Recommendations have been developed for pregnant women with presumptive exposure to *Listeria monocytogenes*. These guidelines were published as a Committee Opinion online Aug. 5 in *Obstetrics & Gynecology*.

Noting that the incidence of [listeriosis](#) is about 13 times higher among [pregnant women](#) than in the general population, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists Committee on Obstetric Practice developed [guidelines](#) for management of pregnant women with exposure to *Listeria monocytogenes*.

The researchers note that maternal infection may present as a nonspecific flu-like illness, with symptoms such as fever, myalgia, backache, and headache, which may be preceded by gastrointestinal

symptoms, including diarrhea. Fetal and neonatal infections can be severe, resulting in fetal loss and preterm labor as well as neonatal sepsis, meningitis, and death. An exposed pregnant woman with a fever above 38.1 degrees Celsius and symptoms indicative of listeriosis should be simultaneously tested and treated for presumptive listeriosis. For asymptomatic pregnant women who report consumption of a product that was recalled or implicated during a listeria outbreak, no testing or treatment is indicated. Expectant management is recommended for women who are afebrile, but have gastrointestinal or flu-like symptoms.

"These recommendations will help to inform the care that we give to our patients, and will help us to alleviate their concerns," Jeffrey L. Ecker, M.D., chair of the Committee on Obstetric Practice, said in a statement. "Fortunately most women who are exposed won't develop a listeria infection, and in many cases, careful observation for fever or other signs and symptoms is all that is needed."

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
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