

Consumer Advisory for Raw or Undercooked Meats, Eggs, Seafood, and Unpasteurized Juices & Parasite Destruction

[Chapter 246-215-03620](#) and [246-215-03425 Washington Administrative Code](#)

When raw or undercooked meats, eggs, seafood, or unpasteurized juices are offered for sale in a ready-to-eat form, a consumer advisory must be posted informing consumers that these foods pose a health risk because they are not processed to eliminate pathogens. Additionally, certain seafoods that are served raw or undercooked must be treated to destroy parasites.

Note: Food offered raw or undercooked cannot be offered to a highly susceptible population or from a children's section of any menu.

Which foods are involved?

Food establishments must post a consumer advisory if they serve:

- Raw or undercooked foods of animal origin
- Unpasteurized fruit and vegetable juices packaged in the food establishment

Example foods that need a consumer advisory:

- Raw or rare meats cooked to order like steak or prime rib
- Caesar salad dressing, hollandaise sauce, chocolate mousse, house-made eggnog, ice cream, or meringues containing raw or undercooked unpasteurized eggs
- Packaged, unpasteurized juices prepared at the retail establishment
- Raw oysters
- Raw, wild shrimp ceviche
- Fresh, unfrozen finfish such as halibut or salmon which are undercooked
- Sushi or foods containing raw or undercooked seafood
- Pickled herring or cold smoked salmon
- Eggs cooked to order

A consumer advisory consists of two parts: A disclosure and a reminder. Food establishments must identify unpasteurized juices packaged in the food establishment or foods of animal origin that are served raw or undercooked, even if they are made to order. Disclosures and reminders must be provided on all menus that advertise or describe the food, including paper menus, tabletop placards, specials noted on posters or chalkboards, deli case menu advisories, label statements, online menus, or other effective written means.

Disclosure

A disclosure must include a description of the food such as:

- Oysters on the half shell (raw oysters)
- Caesar salad (house made dressing from unpasteurized raw eggs)
- Foods that are cooked to order like steaks, burgers, or eggs

Asterisking (*) the food to a footnote is required to state that the items are served raw or undercooked, or contain (or may contain) raw or undercooked ingredients.



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Reminder

In addition to disclosing which foods are served raw or undercooked, food establishments must also remind consumers of the health risk associated with eating these foods. The reminder statement must be in the same location as the disclosure and where customers can easily find it, preferably on the page where the first undercooked item appears. The footnote can use one of the following statements:

- *“Regarding the safety of these items, written information is available upon request.”*
- *“Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish, or eggs might increase your risk of foodborne illness.”*
- *“Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish, or eggs might increase your risk of foodborne illness, especially if you have certain medical conditions.”*

Fresh, unfrozen finfish

Fresh, unfrozen finfish such as halibut or salmon which are partially cooked can be served only upon consumer request and described on the menu as “fresh fish (can be cooked to order)”. This requires a disclosure footnote separate from the consumer advisory above. The disclosure should state *“Regarding the safety of consuming fresh partially cooked fish, information is available upon request”*.

The information available upon request must include mention of parasite risks from eating undercooked fresh fish. A separate, unique asterisk or symbol is needed on the menu to identify this consumer advisory. Information available upon request must:

- Refer to the document on the menu, **or**
- Make the document readily accessible to consumers prior to ordering. *Readily accessible* means the consumer can get it without having to ask for it. In this case, the reminder statement is not required to be on the menu.

Parasite Destruction

Raw, raw-marinated, partially cooked, or marinated partially cooked fish must be frozen to destroy parasites that can cause illness. Also, parasites are not destroyed by pickling, salting, or cold smoking. A consumer advisory reminder for partially cooked fish must be separate from other consumer advisories on your menu, using a separate asterisk or symbol. This means you may have two different consumer advisories listed.

The following seafoods do not require parasite destruction:

- *Fresh unfrozen finfish such as halibut or salmon* which are partially cooked upon customer request
- *Aquacultured fish* raised in net pens, ponds or tanks fed feed that contains no live parasites
- *Fish eggs* that have been removed from the skein and rinsed
- *Molluscan shellfish*
- *A scallop* product of only the shucked adductor muscle
- Some tuna species:
 - *Thunnus alalunga* (Longfin tuna)
 - *Thunnus albacares* (Yellowfin tuna)
 - *Thunnus atlanticus* (Blackfin tuna)
 - *Thunnus maccoyii* (Southern Bluefin tuna)
 - *Thunnus obesus* (Bigeye tuna)
 - *Thunnus thynnus* (Northern Bluefin tuna)

Most establishments purchase seafood requiring parasite destruction from suppliers that can provide a statement that freezing processes have been correctly completed. Most freezers cannot accomplish the required temperatures and record keeping. The time and temperatures to achieve parasite destruction are:

-4 F (-20 C)	168 hours (7 days)
-31 F (-35 C) until solid	Then stored -31 F (-35 C) minimum 15 hours
-31 F (-35 C) until solid	Then stored -4 F (-20 C) minimum 24 hours