

Courtley's Most dangerous foods in the world

Health and safety is an important factor in the workplace and in life in general. If you are in the food industry and taking care of adventurous eaters it could be the difference between life or death and we don't mean with saturated fat, sugars or cholesterol. Some foods if improperly prepared, will at the very least make you terribly sick. While you probably won't encounter most of the items during your life, a few of them are surprisingly common.

From Pufferfish to hot dogs, we've compiled a list of some of the most dangerous foods around the world and how deadly they can be to eat...



APRICOT SEEDS

Seeds of cherries, plums, peaches, almonds, apricots, and apples contain cyanogenetic glycosides, which upon ingestion release hydrogen cyanide. In Turkey, known for its large population of apricot trees, a few have died after "seed binges". Roasting the seeds make them safe for consumption.



ACKEE

The African Ackee fruit can be eaten raw, or mixed in with traditional dishes. The danger comes from the large black seeds inside the fruit. They contain the poison hypoglycin, which if consumed, causes severe vomiting, and in worse case scenarios, coma or even death.



BLOODCLAMS

Although blood clams are considered one of the more delicious Chinese delicacies, the style of preparation in Shanghai involves quick-boiling them, leaving many viruses and bacteria present, including hepatitis A, E, typhoid, and dysentery.



BULLFROG

Danger comes when the frog selected for supper happens to be a tad too young. Ones that have not bred yet, carry a poison that can cause temporary kidney failure. Chances are you won't "croak" after eating one (provided you seek medial attention), but you'll probably be sick for a fair amount of time.



CASSAVA ROOT

Cassava root is used to make tapioca, and it's also a vital part in the diets of millions of people worldwide. If the cassava is improperly prepared, it can produce cyanide. Make sure it's always properly cultivated and cooked, otherwise you might get some unwanted poison as well.



CASU MARZU CHEESE

This Italian cheese is left out in the open and flies buzz on by and lay eggs inside. Hatched maggots eat some of the cheese, and the fermentation process speeds along. Surviving maggots inside the human body cause severe health problems, like bloody diarrhea and vomiting.



ECHIZEN KURAGE

Nomura's Jellyfish is very large and the diameter when fully grown is slightly greater than the height of an average man, the largest cnidarian in the world. The toxic parts of the jellyfish need to be removed so that it can be prepared without risk for human consumption.



ELDERBERRIES

Containing a cyanide-inducing glycoside, eating a sufficient quantity of these can cause a toxic buildup in the body and make you quite ill. Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and even coma. Cooking the berries destroys the glycosides present in the seeds, making them safe to eat.



FUGU (PUFFERFISH)

An expensive delicacy found in Japan. When the fish, and the dish, is properly prepared, there isn't any problem with eating it but when the fish is improperly prepared, you'll probably die. Fugu contains a tetrodotoxin that will cause your muscles to freeze up, and keep you from breathing and there is no antidote..



HOTDOGS

Not all of the foods on this list are strange and exotic. Everyone loves hot dogs and as common as they are, they come with some risk. Hot dogs can cause asphyxiation, especially in young children, which can lead to death. So always take small bites, and chew or cut them up into smaller pieces.



MONKEY BRAIN

There are places, mostly in Asia, where you can eat a primate's brains. The danger comes from Variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, which can lurk inside a monkey's skull. This disease, which is similar to Mad Cow disease causes rapidly progressive dementia and psychosis.



MUSHROOMS

Cooked with garlic, butter and a pasta sauce mushrooms can be delicious. Picking your own can be deadly if you choose the wrong kind. Poisonous mushrooms or "toadstools," carry toxins that kill. Always know what kind of mushroom you're picking, and hunt for them with a knowledgeable guide.



PEANUTS

Peanuts are the most common cause of food-allergy deaths, according to the Asthma and Allergy Academy and Immunology. And for little understood reasons, it's on the rise. From 1997 to 2002, incidents of peanut allergy doubled in children.



RHUBARB

When cooking rhubarb only use the stem, and never, ever consume the leaves. Rhubarb leaves contain oxalates, which can poison you if ingested in significant amounts, and cause seizures and severe respiratory problems. Be careful when baking that rhubarb pie.



SANNAKJI

In Korea a Sannakji wriggling octopus is a great seafood treat. Pick them up in local markets but be careful as these octopi are served while the animal is still moving. They have been known to attach their tentacles and suction cups around the necks of diners and choke them to death.

The old saying "you are what you eat" takes on new meaning when what you "eat" could potentially kill you. So take care when planning your diet for the day - at least now you know a few foods you want to avoid.



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