

Providing consumer advice on high-risk foods on menus



In a nutshell: Providing consumer advice on raw or undercooked foods on menus helps consumers in making informed food choices. By doing so, restaurant owners not only help protecting consumers, especially susceptible populations, from foodborne illnesses, but also promoting the image as a responsible food trader.

Raw or undercooked foods, such as meat, poultry, seafood and eggs, are high-risk foods as there is no or inadequate heat treatment to eliminate the disease-causing microorganisms present. Consumption of food contaminated by bacteria or viruses can cause illnesses. Common symptoms include vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal pain and fever. As for parasites, some can cause mild to moderate gastrointestinal symptoms. No matter which type of pathogens is involved, susceptible individuals including pregnant women, infants, young children, the elderly and people with weakened immunity are more likely to have severe symptoms and even face the risk of death.

Food premises can provide consumer advice through:

- Brochures
- Posters
- Menus
- Table tents or other written means



This is an example of consumer advice:

Consuming raw or undercooked foods may increase the risk of foodborne illness, especially for pregnant women, infants, young children, the elderly and people with weakened immunity.

Restaurants must present accurate and sufficient food information to allow consumers to make informed choices. This will not only safeguard consumers, especially susceptible individuals, from foodborne diseases, but will also promote the image as a responsible food trader. In addition, waiting staff can alert customers to the high-risk foods, for example: would you consider a fully cooked egg instead of an undercooked one?