

## Listeria: Truth or Scare. A Fresh Look at Stale Guidelines

**Katya Simon, Valentina Simon, Rebeca Barroso and Mickey Gillmor**

Arlington-Fairfax Clinic, USA


Listeria is a foodborne pathogen capable of crossing the placental-foetal barrier. The exposed foetus may suffer blindness, neurological damage including meningitis, or even death. An analysis of USA federal datasets revealed outdated clinical guidelines, as demonstrated by comparison between foods recalled for Listeria contamination and the foods pregnant women are educated to avoid. While all confirmed listeriosis outbreaks prior to 2000 originated from foods listed in the USA federal guidelines, by 2015-2016 such foods were only responsible for 5% of cases. Contamination shifted from high-risk foods identified in the 1998 federal guidelines into previously unavailable ready-to-eat foods. A dynamic food supply requires dynamic real-time feedback to the consumer. We present an app, [savvyfood.com](http://savvyfood.com), that places previously unsearchable USA federal food safety datasets, maintained by multiple agencies, onto every woman's cell phone in the grocery aisle, exemplifying the concept of consumer-driven "dynamic guidelines". Currently, the app is expanding

to include other food-borne illnesses. As current Listeria prevention guidelines are obsolete, pregnant women need access to real-time information in order to make informed decisions.

### Speaker Biography

Katya Simon, CNM, MSN, MS is a midwife at Arlington-Fairfax Clinic in Virginia. Her habit of thinking as a scientist was ingrained during her previous career as a research chemist and reinforced during midwifery studies in Frontier Nursing University. As a graduate of the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing, she worked in diverse birth settings. In addition to midwifery practice, Katya engages in national-level work for the American College of Nurse-Midwives, in the Division of Research. Katya's 2018 publication on listeriosis was recognized as a top 3 submission by a new author to the Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health. In 2019, Katya authored a chapter on unexpected birth outcomes, co-authored with a former ACNM president Ginger Breedlove, in a recent book "Nobody Told Me About That: The first 6 weeks".

e: [katya.simon@frontier.edu](mailto:katya.simon@frontier.edu)

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