

Recently I saw an [article](#) that reported that the Queen avoids both rare meat and seafoods. Well, we at least have that in common.

A few years ago I was interviewed by [Business Insider](#) and we wound up talking about the foods that I avoid. Here is the interview.

Bill Marler is the most prominent food-safety lawyer in the US. He has represented victims in nearly every food-borne illness outbreak in the US in the last 20 years, including the recent ones at Costco and Chipotle. He knows just how scary these illnesses are. Shockingly, every year, foodborne bugs sicken 48 million Americans—sending 128,000 to the hospital and 3,000 to an early grave.

So we asked him if there are any foods that he never eats. He named six.



**1. Unpasteurized (“raw”) milk and packaged juices.** Unpasteurized milk,

sometimes called “raw” milk, can be contaminated with bacteria, viruses and parasites. Between 1998 and 2011, there were 148 food poisoning outbreaks linked to raw milk and raw milk products in the US—and keep in mind that comparatively few people in the country ever consume these products, so 148 outbreaks is nothing to ignore. As for unpasteurized packaged juices, one of Marler’s earliest cases was the 1996 E. coli outbreak from unpasteurized Odwalla apple juice. As a result, he won’t go near [raw milk](#) or juice. “There’s no benefit big enough to take away the risk of drinking products that can be made safe by pasteurization,” he says.



**2. Raw sprouts.** Uncooked and lightly cooked sprouts have been linked to more

than 30 bacterial outbreaks (mostly of Salmonella and E. coli) in the US since mid-1990s. As recently as 2014, salmonella from bean sprouts sent 19 people to the hospital. All types of sprouts—including alfalfa, mung bean, clover and radish sprouts—can spread infection, which is caused by bacterial contamination of their seeds. “There have been too many outbreaks to not pay attention to the risk of sprout contamination,” Marler says. “Those are products that I just don’t eat at all.” He did add that he does eat them if they’re cooked.



**3. Meat that isn’t well-done.** Marler orders his burgers well-done. “The reason

ground products are more problematic and need to be cooked more thoroughly is that any bacteria that's on the surface of the meat can be ground inside of it," Marler says. "If it's not cooked thoroughly to 160°F throughout, it can cause poisoning by E. coli and salmonella and other bacterial illnesses." As for steaks, needle tenderizing—a common restaurant practice in which the steak is pierced with needles or sliced with knives to break down the muscle fibers and make it more tender—can also transfer bugs from the surface to the interior of the meat. If a restaurant does this (Marler asks), he orders his steak well-done. If the restaurant doesn't, he'll opt for medium-well.



**4. Prewashed or precut fruits and vegetables.** "I avoid these like the plague,"

Marler says. Why? The more a food is handled and processed, the more likely it is to become tainted. "We've gotten so used to the convenience of mass-produced food—bagged salad and boxed salads and precut this and precut that," Marler says. "Convenience is great but sometimes I think it isn't worth the risk." He buys unwashed, uncut produce in small amounts and eats it within three to four days to reduce the risk for listeria, a deadly bug that grows at refrigerator temps.



**5. Raw or undercooked eggs.** You may remember the salmonella epidemic of

the 1980s and early '90s that was linked mainly to eggs. If you swore off raw eggs back then, you might as well stick with it. The most recent salmonella outbreak from eggs, in 2010, caused roughly 2,000 reported cases of illness. "I think the risk of egg contamination is much lower today than it was 20 years ago for salmonella, but I still eat my eggs well-cooked," Marler says.



**6. Raw oysters and other raw shellfish.** Marler says that raw

shellfish—especially oysters—have been causing more foodborne illness lately. He links this to warming waters, which produce more microbial growth. "Oysters are filter feeders, so they pick up everything that's in the water," he explains. "If there's bacteria in the water it'll get into their system, and if you eat it you could have trouble. I've seen a lot more of that over the last five years than I saw in the last 20 years. It's simply not worth the risk."

Source: [Publisher's Platform: Two foods the Queen does not eat and the 6 foods I do not](#)