ADVICE ABOUT EATING FISH

For Women Who Are or Might Become Pregnant, Breastfeeding Mothers, and Young Children

Eating fish‡ when pregnant or breastfeeding can provide health benefits.

Fish and other protein-rich foods have nutrients that can help your child's growth and development.
As part of a healthy eating pattern, eating fish may also offer heart health benefits and lower the risk of obesity.

Nutritional Value of Fish

The *2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommends:

- At least 8 ounces of seafood (less for young children) per week based on a 2,000 calorie diet

- Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding to consume between 8 and 12 ounces of a variety of seafood per week, from choices that are lower in mercury.

Fish are part of a healthy eating pattern and provide:

- Protein

- Healthy omega-3 fats (called DHA and EPA)

- More vitamin B_{12} and vitamin D than any other type of food

- Iron which is important for infants, young children, and women who are pregnant or who could become pregnant

- Other minerals like selenium, zinc, and iodine.

Choose a variety of fish that are lower in mercury. (See chart on other side of page.)

While it is important to limit mercury in the diets of women who are pregnant and breastfeeding and young children, many types of fish are both nutritious and lower in mercury.

This advice supports the recommendations of the *2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, developed for people 2 years and older, which reflects current science on nutrition to improve public health. The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* focuses on dietary patterns and the effects of food and nutrient characteristics on health. For advice about feeding children under 2 years of age, you can consult the American Academy of Pediatrics 🗗.

‡ THIS ADVICE REFERS TO FISH AND SHELLFISH COLLECTIVELY AS "FISH" / ADVICE REVISED JULY 2019

This chart can help you choose which fish to eat, and how often to eat them, based on their mercury levels.

What is a serving? As a guide, use the palm of your hand.

For an adult 1 serving = 4 ounces
Eat 2 to 3 servings a week from the "Best Choices" list (**OR** 1 serving from the "Good Choices" list).

For children, a serving is 1 ounce at age 2 and increases with age to 4 ounces by age 11.

If you eat fish caught by family or friends, check for fish advisories. If there is no advisory, eat only one serving and no other fish that week.*

Best Choices EAT 2 TO 3 SERVINGS A WEEK

Anchovy
Atlantic croaker
Atlantic mackerel
Black sea bass
Butterfish
Catfish
Clam
Cod
Crab
Crawfish
Flounder
Haddock
Hake

Herring
Lobster, American and spiny
Mullet
Oyster
Pacific chub mackerel
Perch, freshwater and ocean
Pickerel
Plaice
Pollock
Salmon
Sardine

Scallop
Shad
Shrimp
Skate
Smelt
Sole
Squid
Tilapia
Trout, freshwater
Tuna, canned light (includes skipjack)
Whitefish
Whiting

OR

Good Choices EAT 1 SERVING A WEEK

Bluefish
Buffalofish
Carp
Chilean sea bass/ Patagonian toothfish
Grouper
Halibut
Mahi mahi/ dolphinfish

Monkfish
Rockfish
Sablefish
Sheepshead
Snapper
Spanish mackerel
Striped bass (ocean)

Tilefish (Atlantic Ocean)
Tuna, albacore/ white tuna, canned and fresh/frozen
Tuna, yellowfin
Weakfish/seatrout
White croaker/ Pacific croaker

Choices to Avoid HIGHEST MERCURY LEVELS

King mackerel
Marlin
Orange roughy

Shark
Swordfish

Tilefish (Gulf of Mexico)
Tuna, bigeye

* Some fish caught by family and friends, such as larger carp, catfish, trout and perch, are more likely to have fish advisories due to mercury or other contaminants. State advisories will tell you how often you can safely eat those fish.

www.FDA.gov/fishadvice
www.EPA.gov/fishadvice

EPA United States Environmental Protection Agency

FDA U.S. FOOD & DRUG ADMINISTRATION

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