

Shopper's Guide

Enjoy fish up to the suggested serving size from any one group in the chart below, but don't consume any other fish during that week.

- ✗ Fatty fish that may contain PCBs or other non-mercury pollutants
- ? Fish that have rarely been tested or testing is controversial
- ◆ Seafood that have been overharvested. We advise limiting your consumption of these fish to allow their populations to recover.

Guide to Healthy Fish

Consumption Level	Fish Species	Notes
Enjoy up to 2 servings each week	Anchovies	Lowest Mercury Levels
	Catfish	
	Clams	
	Crab (Blue, King and Snow/US, Canada)	
	Crayfish	
	Flatfish (Flounder and Sole, Pacific/Atlantic)	
	Haddock	
	✗ Herring	
	Mackerel (canned)	
	? Oysters	
	Pollock (includes fish sticks/imitation crab)	
	Salmon (wild Pacific) *	
	Sardines	
	Scallops	
Shad (American)		
? Shrimp (US)	* Wild Salmon is naturally high in Omega-3 Fatty Acids and Low in Mercury and PCBs!	
Squid (includes calamari)		
Tilapia (US/Central America)		
Trout (freshwater)		
Perch (freshwater)		
1 Serving / week		◆ Cod (small, Atlantic)
		Lobster (spiny, US and Canada)
		Mackerel Chub (Pacific)
		Mackerel - Spanish (S. Atlantic)
		Skate
		? Tuna (canned chunk light)
		Whitefish
		Bass (saltwater-black/striped, excludes Chilean)
		✗ Bluefish
	Croaker (white, Pacific)	
1/2 Serving / week	Eel	
	◆ Grouper (small)	
	Halibut (Pacific)	
	Lobster (Northern/American)	
	Mackerel - Spanish (Gulf of Mexico)	
	Mahi Mahi	
	◆ Monkfish	* Farm raised salmon contain higher levels of PCBs and many other persistent chemical pollutants. Operations located near wild salmon habitat can transfer diseases to wild fish.
	Sablefish	
	◆ Snapper/Rockfish	
	? Tuna (canned, Albacore)	
Weakfish (Sea Trout)		
Bass (Chilean)		
Marlin		
Mackerel - King (Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico)		
◆ Orange Roughy		
✗ Salmon (farmed/Atlantic) *		
Avoid	◆ Shark	
	◆ Swordfish	
	◆ Tilefish (Gulf of Mexico)	
	? Tuna steaks (fresh/frozen)	
	Highest Mercury Levels	

Remember to check local and state fish advisories.



Information & Advisories

Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHA)

Safe eating guidelines: local advisories & fish consumption benefits

www.oehha.ca.gov/fish.html

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

National store-bought fish consumption advice
www.epa.gov/waterscience/fish/advisory.html

Environmental Health Investigations Branch Ca. Dept. of Health Services

www.ehib.org

Cal EPA Dept. of Toxic Substances Control

<http://dtsc.ca.gov/HazardousWaste/Mercury/index.cfm>

Got Mercury?

Mercury Calculator
www.gotmercury.org

Safe Harbor® Testing & Standards

Certification standards for mercury concentrations in fish sold with their Safe Harbor® seal
www.safeharborfoods.com

If you find toxins in your home contact:

1-800-CLEANUP (1-800-253-2687)
<http://ccelearn.csus.edu/mercurylamp/content/resources5.htm>
or www.earth911.org

For more information or to find out how you can get involved contact:



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Revised 7-15-2010

EATING FISH SAFELY

Balancing Nutrition
Avoiding
Mercury Toxins

Information for

- Pregnant women
- Nursing mothers
- Children 19 and under
- Women planning to become pregnant



Chunk light Tuna:

Regardless of above EPA or FDA guidelines (which are controversial) Consumer Reports and CIEA believes **pregnant women should not eat any canned tuna.** Instead try canned wild salmon.

Fish tissue levels from FDA 2000 data (updated January 2006), consumption advice from EPA, confirmed through Got Mercury Calculator at www.gotmercury.org, and referenced the Safe Harbor Testing & Standards. More protective levels listed in all cases. For more information visit FDA at www.cfsan.fda.gov or EPA at www.epa.gov/osf/fish. Chart adapted from PSR's Healthy Fish and Healthy Families brochure.

Fish are nutritious and part of many of our Peoples' cultures and traditional diets. You can continue to eat fish by paying attention to serving sizes, and choosing fish high in omega-3 fatty acids and low in toxins.

Health Benefits

- **Fish are an important source of omega-3 fatty acids** - essential in the development and maintenance of the brain, heart, nervous system and the cells of developing fetus, babies, children and adults.
- Wild river-caught salmon are naturally high in omega-3 fatty acids.
- Other safe sources are fish oil supplements, if a low mercury fish. Vegetarian sources such as, algal oil supplements, flax, walnuts, pumpkin seeds, soy and canola oil are not as effective or beneficial as fish sources.

More Tips for Safer Fish

- To avoid other toxins in fish, remove or puncture the skin before cooking so fat can drain off.
- Don't save drippings for reuse.
- If pregnant, avoid raw fish. Cook fish until it flakes with a fork.

Other Ways to Protect Your Family from Toxins

- If heated, Mercury can enter the body by breathing in the vapors.
- If spilled, call Toxic Substances Control in your area. **DO NOT VACUUM MERCURY.**
- Replace mercury thermometers with digital ones. Do not throw mercury thermometers in the trash. Call 1-800-CLEANUP for disposal.
- Firewood and basketmaking materials, or food gathered near mercury laden sediments, may contain mercury or mercury soil. Secure access to safe gathering locations.
- Consider other contaminants in foods since there are likely to be cumulative risks.

Mercury: Toxic in the Body

- Mercury can damage the brain, central nervous system, immune system, kidneys and heart.
- In pregnant women, mercury can cause permanent learning disabilities in the developing fetus, even at very low levels.
- Children are particularly vulnerable.
- If you feel you, your baby or your child may be at risk, talk to your doctor.

Pregnant or planning on becoming pregnant?

- Mercury stays in the human body for about 1 year. Start making healthy choices now.

Eating Wild-Caught Fish?

- Only some lakes and rivers in California have been tested.
- **Check local advisories for locations where you fish** at OEHHA: www.oehha.ca.gov/fish.html



Photo courtesy of the Seventh Generation Fund.

- **Wild river-caught salmon are low in mercury and PCBs, and are best for the environment!**
- Salmon in enclosed lakes and reservoirs have higher levels of mercury.

How Does Mercury get into Fish?

- Mercury was used during the Gold Rush and is now found in varying levels in all of California's streams, rivers lakes and bays.
- Small organisms and fish eat particles of it and as it goes up the food chain the levels increase with each larger and older fish.

Eating Fish Safely

- Avoid large predatory fish whether wild-caught or store bought.
- Eat smaller younger fish, which generally contain less mercury.
- Mercury is stored in the entire fish. You cannot clean the head guts, fat and skin to get rid of it. Other toxins, like PCBs may be stored there so trimming off these areas is still a good idea.
- Check fish you plan to eat at the EPA and OEHHA websites. You can also visit a mercury calculator website such as the one at www.gotmercury.org.



Photo courtesy of the Seventh Generation Fund.

What is a Serving Size?

- A serving is 6 ounces of cooked fish, or about the size and thickness of the palm of your hand.
- Give children smaller, age appropriate, servings.

