

Fish to Avoid

Mercury levels are too high

Do not eat the following fish if you are pregnant or may become pregnant, or are under 15 years old:

- King mackerel
- Muskellunge (Muskie)
- Shark
- Swordfish
- Tilefish

Raw and smoked fish may cause illness

If you are or might be pregnant:

- **Eat only cooked fish**—Parasites and bacteria in uncooked fish, such as sushi, can cause illness.
- **Avoid smoked fish** due to concerns about the bacteria Listeria.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- **Minnesota Department of Health**
PO Box 64975, St. Paul, MN 55164-0975
health.state.mn.us/fish
800-657-3908
- **Minnesota Department of Natural Resources LakeFinder**
dnr.state.mn.us/lakefind/index.html

The guidelines in this brochure are based on mercury and PCB levels in fish from waters throughout Minnesota and mercury found in purchased fish.

Visit health.state.mn.us/fish for recommendations for specific Minnesota lakes and rivers and guidelines for men, older boys and women who are not and will not become pregnant.

To obtain this information in a different format, call **651-201-4911**.



Bought or Caught

Think: species, size and source

How much mercury is in fish depends on the:

- **Species.** Some fish have more mercury than others because of what they eat and how long they live.
 - **Size.** Smaller fish generally have less mercury than larger, older fish of the same species. Unlike people, fish do not get rid of mercury.
 - **Source.** Fish from lakes in northeastern Minnesota generally have more mercury than in southern and central Minnesota. How clean a lake looks is not a sign of how safe the fish are to eat.
- Fish bought at a store or restaurant also contain mercury. Farm-raised fish, such as salmon, are low in mercury but can contain other contaminants that may be found in fish feed. The amount of contaminants is small enough that farm-raised salmon are still good to eat 2 times a week.

Cooking, cleaning and contaminants

- You **cannot remove mercury** through cleaning, trimming fat or cooking. Mercury gets into the flesh of fish.
- You **can reduce some other contaminants** by trimming skin and fat when you clean and cook fish.

LIGHT OR WHITE CANNED TUNA?

Choose canned light tuna more often than canned white tuna. Canned light tuna has 3 times less mercury than canned white (albacore) tuna and is less expensive.



Parmesan Salmon

Try this easy, tasty recipe for serving up a good source of omega-3s. Salmon has a rich, buttery taste and tender, large flakes. Serve with brown rice and a mixed green salad for up to 4 people.

What you need

- 1 pound salmon fillet (not steak)
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tablespoon horseradish, drained
- 1/3 cup plain nonfat yogurt
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

How to prepare

1. Arrange the fillet, skin side down, on foil-covered broiler pan.
2. Combine remaining ingredients and spread over fillet.
3. Bake at 450°F or broil on high for 10 to 15 minutes, until you can easily flake the fillet with a fork. Do not overcook fish.

Other options

Grill on foil sprayed with cooking oil for 10 to 15 minutes. Use tilapia instead of salmon.

FOR MORE RECIPES

Visit ChooseYourFish.org to learn how to select and cook fish.



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CHOOSE YOUR FISH

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
WOMEN & CHILDREN

CHOOSE YOUR FISH



Take a photo of these recommendations to save, share, post or pin.

These recommendations* are for **women who are or may become pregnant and children under 15 years old.**

OR

AND

EVERY WEEK: EAT 2 TIMES

VERY LOW MERCURY

From stores and restaurants

- Catfish (farm raised)
- Cod
- Herring ♥
- Mackerel (Atlantic) ♥
- Pollock
- Salmon (Atlantic and Pacific) ♥
- Sardines ♥
- Shellfish (such as shrimp and crab)
- Tilapia
- Fish sticks and sandwiches

♥ Higher in omega-3s

EVERY WEEK: EAT 1 TIME

LOW MERCURY

From stores and restaurants

- Canned light tuna
- Halibut

From Minnesota lakes and rivers

- Bullhead
- Crappie
- Lake herring (Cisco)
- Lake whitefish
- Sunfish (such as bluegill)
- Yellow perch

[IF YOU CHOOSE] EVERY MONTH: EAT 1 TIME

MEDIUM MERCURY

From stores and restaurants

- Canned white (albacore) tuna
- Chilean sea bass
- Grouper
- Marlin
- Tuna (fillet and steak)

From Minnesota lakes and rivers

- Bass
- Catfish
- Lake trout
- Northern pike
- Walleye
- All other Minnesota species not listed

* These recommendations are based on a portion size of 8 ounces (raw fish) for someone who weighs 150 pounds. Visit health.state.mn.us/fish for more information about serving size.



The omega-3 fatty acids found in fish are called EPA and DHA. Our bodies cannot make EPA and DHA. Eating fish is the main way to get these important fatty acids that you do not get from other foods. (Supplements may not be as beneficial.) Here is the best part:

- DHA is a building block of the brain and eyes.
- Pregnant women and breastfeeding moms can eat fish to give DHA to their babies.
- Eating fish can lower the risk of heart disease.

What about mercury and other contaminants?

The benefits of eating fish outweigh the risks when eating fish low in mercury and other contaminants.

Young children (under 15 years old) and fetuses are more sensitive to mercury. Too much mercury can cause lasting problems with understanding and learning. But studies show children benefit developmentally when moms eat fish low in mercury during pregnancy.

What to do?

- Eat fish.
- Follow the recommendations in this brochure to prevent mercury and other contaminants from building up in your body.
- Contaminants take time to leave the body, so spread out your fish meals over time.

Fresh, frozen or canned, store-bought or locally caught—fish tastes good and is good for you.

Do the body and brain good

Eating fish 1 to 2 times a week has health benefits for people of all ages.

Fish are a great choice for serving up tasty lean protein with plenty of vitamins and minerals. Fish also are a natural source of omega-3 fatty acids—a good kind of fat!

Visit ChooseYourFish.org for more information.

