

What about locally caught fish?

For freshwater fish from New Hampshire waters, women of childbearing age CAN SAFELY EAT one 8-ounce meal, and young children CAN SAFELY EAT one 4-ounce meal per month. For specific guidelines, please look for the statewide fish consumption advisory on the DES website www.des.nh.gov.



Eating fish is a healthy choice. By following these guidelines you can enjoy the health benefits of eating fish and minimize your exposure to mercury.

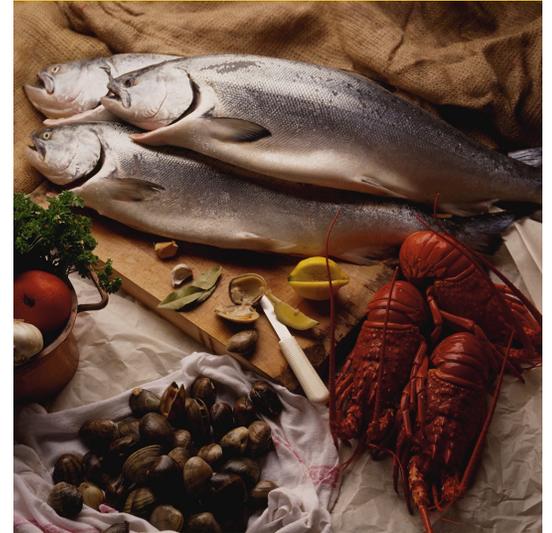
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FISH

An Important Part of a HEALTHY DIET



Here's why!



From the
New Hampshire Department
of Environmental Services

Making Healthy Choices

Why are fish an important part of a healthy diet?

A well-balanced diet that includes a variety of fish and shellfish can contribute to heart health and children's proper growth and development. Fish are a great source of protein, vitamins, and minerals and omega-3 fatty acids, a key nutrient for brain development. Many health experts recommend eating fish during pregnancy.

Why is there mercury in fish?

Mercury can come from natural and man-made sources. Mercury in the air settles into lakes and rivers and can build up in fish.

All fish have some mercury including:

- Fish caught in all New Hampshire lakes and rivers.
- Fish you buy at a store or eat in a restaurant.

Should I be concerned about mercury in the fish I eat?

Nearly all fish and shellfish contain traces of mercury. For most people the risk from mercury by eating fish and shellfish is not a health concern. Yet some kinds of fish contain higher levels of mercury. Mercury builds up in the body and high levels could cause

harm to an unborn baby or young child's developing nervous system. The potential risks from mercury in fish depend on how much and what kinds of fish are eaten.

The Department of Environmental Services advises women who may become pregnant, pregnant women, nursing mothers and young children to avoid the types of fish that are high in mercury, and to eat more fish and shellfish that are low in mercury.

Remember that these guidelines are additive, for example, if you or your children consume one meal of tuna steak, you should avoid all other fish that week. If you eat one meal of haddock, you should eat another meal of fish that is low in mercury during that week.



Guidelines For Women of Childbearing Age & Young Children

BEST CHOICES (2 meals per week):

Catfish, Cod, Flounder, Haddock, Herring, Light Tuna (canned), Pollack, Sole, Salmon, Tilapia, Trout and Shellfish (Oysters, Shrimp, Crab, Clams, Scallops, Lobster)

GOOD CHOICES (1 meal per week):

Halibut, Red Snapper, Tuna Steak, White Tuna (canned)

AVOID:

King Mackerel, Swordfish, Shark, Tilefish

How can I find out the mercury levels of other fish?

If you need more information about the levels of mercury in various kinds of fish see the FDA food safety web site at www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/ucm110591.htm, or the EPA website at www.epa.gov/ost/fish.

What if I eat more than the recommended amount?

One week's fish consumption does not change the level of mercury in your body much at all. If you eat a lot of fish one week, you can just cut back for the next week or two.