Fish Consumption Advice for Small Children, Women of Childbearing Age, and Pregnant Women

Canada's Food Guide recommends eating **at least 2 servings of fish** each week
(each serving = 75 grams, or 2.5 ounces)

Eat every day

fish that are good choices for you and your family to eat every day

Basa	Pollock
Capelin	Salmon *(Chum, Coho, Pink, canned, wild pacific)* ♥
Kamaboko *(fish cake; processed white fish)*	Sea Urchin
Octopus	Tilapia
Oyster	

Eat often

(low mercury fish)
2 servings a week for *small children
4 servings a week for women

- Anchovies♥
- Clam
- Cod
- Flounder
- Haddock
- Herring ♥
- Mackerel *(Atlantic)* ♥
- Mussel, Blue
- Rainbow Trout ♥
- Salmon ♥ *(unknown, Atlantic, Chinook, Sockeye, Steelhead, Note: most farmed salmon is Atlantic)*
- Sardines ♥
- Scallops
- Sea Cucumber
- Shrimp / Prawn
- Smelt *(Atlantic, Lake)*
- Sole *(Dover, Petrale)*
- Squid
- Tuna, canned light *(skipjack, tongol, yellowfin)*

Eat sometimes

1–2 servings per month for small children
2–4 servings per month for women

- Catfish
- Crab and Lobster
- Grouper
- Halibut
- Kingfish *(Spanish, King Mackerel)* ♥
- Lake Trout ♥
- Mahi Mahi *(Dolphin Fish)*
- Perch
- Redfish
- Skate
- Snapper
- Trout ♥
- Tuna steak *(skipjack, southern bluefin, yellowfin)*
- Tuna, canned *(white, albacore)*
- Whiting

Avoid Eating

(high mercury fish)

- Barracuda
- Escolar *(Snake Mackerel)* ♥
- Marlin
- Orange Roughy
- Sablefish *(Black cod)*
- Sea Bass
- Shark *(Spiny Dogfish / Northern Shark, Porbeagle)*
- Swordfish
- Tilefish *(Gulf of Mexico)*
- Tuna steak *(unknown, bigeye)*

- Small children are between the ages of 1 and 4 years of age and weigh 16.5 kg (approximately 36 pounds). If your child is smaller, reduce the serving size of fish.
- Older children ages 5 to 15 years of age can follow the consumption advice for small children, but they can eat a larger serving size.
- This fish consumption advice only applies to fish bought at the market or store. If sport fish are consumed, refer to the Ministry of the Environment's Guide to Eating Ontario Sport Fish. http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/guide/.

♥ = Indicates high omega-3 fats *(for more information see our Mercury and Retail Fish Fact Sheet).*

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Additional Fish Consumption Advice

Everyone, including pregnant women *(see other side),* should eat fish and shellfish. Canada's Food Guide recommends eating **at least 2 servings of fish** each week *(total of 150 grams or 5 ounces)* because of the excellent nutritional value.

However, there is a concern about mercury in seafood. Most seafood contains only a tiny amount of this substance. Men and women who are not in their childbearing years should enjoy a **variety** of fish, but should limit high mercury fish to 1 serving per week.

Salmon is one of the best sources of omega-3 fatty acids and is an excellent source of high quality protein and low in mercury. Based on Health Canada's research, salmon is safe as well as healthy for you and your children. However, some concerns have been raised that salmon may contain a small amount of PCBs. To lower the amounts of pollutants remove inner organs, the skin, and some of the brown fatty meat from fish before cooking and grill or broil the fish for a healthy choice.

What about raw fish?

Raw fish may contain parasites or bacteria and should not be consumed by pregnant woman as it could lead to illness and/or fetal complications. Fresh or frozen tuna which are high in mercury maybe be found in some sushi and sashimi dishes.

Where to find more information

The health benefits of eating fish are greater than the risks. We can all safely enjoy fish and shellfish in our diets by being aware of the types of seafood to limit or avoid! For more information read our fact sheet titled, *Mercury and Retail Fish* or call Your Health Connection at 705-721-7520 (1-877-721-7520) or visit these websites:

Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit
www.simcoemuskokahealth.org

Health Canada
www.hc-sc.gc.ca

Ministry of Environment – Guide to Eating Ontario Sport Fish
www.ene.gov.on.ca/en/water/fishguide/index.php

Revised October 2010