

# Seafood Safety

## To reduce your risk of foodborne illness:

- ◆ Refrigerate fish below 40°F
- ◆ Keep cooked and raw seafood separate
- ◆ Wash hands, knives, and forks before and after touching raw or cooked seafood
- ◆ Cook seafood to an internal temperature of 145°F for at least 15 seconds
- ◆ Properly cooked seafood should be moist and a solid color throughout
- ◆ Purchase seafood from retailers that have high quality and cleanliness



## To reduce your risk from contaminants:

- ◆ For most people the risk from mercury by eating fish and shellfish is not a health concern
- ◆ Follow the guidelines for consumers inside this brochure to lower risks and maximize benefits
- ◆ The greatest risk of exposure to contaminants is from seafood caught by family and friends in polluted lakes and rivers
- ◆ Remove the skin from the fish and trim the fat to reduce exposure



## For more information, visit our website:

<http://seafoodhealthfacts.org>

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# Seafood for Health

## Seafood advice for consumers



<http://seafoodhealthfacts.org>

- ◆ Health benefits of seafood
  - ◆ Tips for reducing risks
  - ◆ Guidelines for consumers

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# Seafood Benefits

Seafood is a healthy food choice for people of all ages. It provides key nutrients for infants and children and is a healthy protein source for adults.



## Nutritional benefits of seafood:

- ◆ Good source of protein
- ◆ Low in saturated fat

## Omega-3 fatty acids:

Seafood is the main source of the omega-3 fatty acids DHA and EPA. These nutrients:



- ◆ Promote healthy brain and eye development in children
- ◆ Reduce the risk of heart disease in adults

U.S. health organizations recommend a daily EPA and DHA intake of:

- ◆ 250 mg for the general population
- ◆ 1000 mg for people with heart disease

Pregnant and nursing women and their children also need EPA and DHA. Oily fish, like salmon, herring, mackerel and sardines, are good sources of EPA and DHA.

*For good health eat a variety of seafood twice a week*

# Guidelines for Consumers

One serving= 4 ounces of cooked fish or shellfish (about the size of the palm of your hand)

## Healthy teenagers and adults



- ◇ Should eat 8 or more ounces of a variety of seafood per week
- ◇ Can reduce their risk of heart disease by eating seafood regularly
- ◇ Can have added benefits from seafood high in EPA and DHA
- ◇ May eat raw or partially cooked seafood at their own risk

## Women who are or may become pregnant or who are breast-feeding



- ◇ Should eat *at least* 8 ounces and up to 12 ounces of a variety of seafood per week
- ◇ Mothers and their infants can benefit from seafood, especially types high in EPA and DHA
- ◇ Can eat up to 6-ounces of albacore (white) tuna per week
- ◇ Should avoid shark, swordfish, tilefish, and king mackerel due to higher mercury levels
- ◇ Should not eat raw or partially cooked seafood, including smoked fish

## Children 12 years and under



- ◇ Should eat about 8 ounces of a variety of seafood per week
- ◇ May benefit from eating seafood, especially types high in EPA and DHA
- ◇ Can eat up to 6 ounces of albacore (white) tuna per week
- ◇ Should avoid shark, swordfish, tilefish and king mackerel due to higher mercury levels
- ◇ Young children should not eat raw or partially cooked seafood, including smoked fish

## Immuno-compromised individuals and older adults



- ◇ Should eat a variety of seafood at least twice per week
- ◇ Can reduce their risk for heart disease by eating seafood regularly
- ◇ Can have added benefits from seafood high in EPA and DHA
- ◇ Should not eat raw or partially cooked seafood

Sources: 2010 USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans; U.S Food and Drug Administration; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; American Heart Association; and Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences

# Health Benefits Linked to Seafood and Omega-3 Fatty Acids

## Heart

- ◇ Reduces the risk of heart disease
- ◇ Helps protect against heart attack and sudden death
- ◇ Decreases blood triglyceride levels

## Eyes

- ◇ Contributes to sharp vision

## Brain

- ◇ Contributes to brain development in infants and children

## Pregnancy

- ◇ Increases duration of gestation

## Muscles

- ◇ Helps build muscles and tissues

Source: Seafood Choices: Balancing Benefits and Risks; Institute of Medicine of the National Academies (2007)



# Balancing Benefits and Risks

## Top Commonly Consumed Seafoods

Based on U.S. per capita consumption, 2006-2008

Shrimp



Canned Tuna



Salmon

Pollock

Tilapia

Catfish



Crab

Cod



Clams/Pangasius/Scallops

- ◆ Health benefits of eating seafood outweigh the risks from contaminants such as trace amounts of mercury or PCBs.
- ◆ Removing seafood from the diet can have negative effects on human health.
- ◆ The most commonly consumed seafood in the United States present very little risk from contaminants like mercury while offering many health and nutritional benefits.
- ◆ Consumers should focus on limiting exposure to bacteria that grow when seafood isn't stored correctly. Learn proper handling, storing, and cooking under the **Seafood Safety** section in this brochure.

Source: National Marine Fisheries Service (2009)