



Seafood Health Facts: Making Smart choices Balancing the Benefits and Risks of Seafood Consumption *Resources for Healthcare Providers and Consumers*

Recreationally Caught Fish and Shellfish [1]

Seafood Safety - National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Medicine Report, 1991. [2]

This comprehensive report summarizes seafood safety issues related to microbial risks, natural toxins and chemical contaminants in both commercial and recreationally caught seafood. The report was produced by a multidisciplinary committee of 13 scientists convened under the auspices of the Academy's Food and Nutrition Board. The committee consisted of experts in the fields of public health, marine pathology, marine toxicology, food science and technology, food microbiology, biostatistics, seafood safety policy and regulations, epidemiology, risk assessment, industry structure, and public interest. The committee was asked to evaluate the health effects of marine and freshwater fishery products (fresh or frozen) available to the consumer from commercial and recreational sources, and to identify options for improvement of the current system of seafood surveillance and control. [To view this report click here \[2\]](#).

U.S. Food and Drug Administration - Food borne Pathogenic Microorganisms and Natural Toxins Handbook (Bad Bug Book) [3]

This FDA Handbook provides information on the illnesses caused by fish and shellfish toxins including Scombrotoxin, Ciguatera, Tetrodotoxin (puffer toxin), and the Shellfish Toxins that cause Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP), Diarrhetic Shellfish Poisoning (DSP), Amnesiac Shellfish Poisoning (ASP) and Neurotoxic Shellfish Poisoning (NSP). Included is information on each of these toxins, food vehicles, symptoms, diagnosis and treatment, and high risk groups. [To see this resource click here \[3\]](#).

October 18, 2006, Fish Intake, Contaminants, and Human Health: Evaluating the risks and the benefits, Clinical Review, Journal of the American Medical Association, 296: 1885-1899 [4]

Abstract (excerpts)

Context: Fish (finfish or shellfish) may have health benefits and also contain contaminants, resulting in confusion over the role of fish consumption in a healthy diet.

Evidence Acquisition: We searched MEDLINE, governmental reports, and meta-analyses, supplemented by hand reviews of references and direct investigator contacts, to identify reports published through April 2006 evaluating (1) intake of fish or fish oil and cardiovascular risk, (2) effects of methylmercury and fish oil on early neurodevelopment, (3) risks of methylmercury for cardiovascular and neurologic outcomes in adults, and (4) health risks of dioxins and polychlorinated biphenyls in fish.

Evidence Synthesis: Levels of dioxins and polychlorinated biphenyls in fish are low, and potential carcinogenic and other effects are outweighed by potential benefits of fish intake and should have little impact on choices or consumption of seafood (women of childbearing age should consult regional advisories for locally caught freshwater fish).

Conclusions: For major health outcomes among adults, based on both the strength of the evidence and the potential magnitudes of effect, the benefits of fish intake exceed the potential risks. For women of childbearing age, benefits of modest fish intake, excepting a few selected species, also outweigh risks. [For full abstract click here \[4\]](#).



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[2] http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=1612&page=R1

[3]
<http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodSafety/FoodborneIllness/FoodborneIllnessFoodbornePathogensNaturalToxins/BadBugBook/default.htm>

[4] <http://jama.ama-assn.org/content/296/15/1885.full>