

### Is fish good for me?

Yes. It is an excellent source of protein and many other nutrients. Fish contains the omega-3 fats DHA and EPA.

DHA helps the brain, eyes and nerves of the fetus and child develop. Pregnant or breastfeeding women, or women who could become pregnant, should eat fish to get DHA. EPA is an omega-3 fat that helps prevent heart disease.

### Are there risks to eating fish?

Yes. Fish may contain mercury. Large fish that live a long time and eat other fish contain the most mercury, which builds up in the tissue of the fish. When we eat these fish, the mercury builds up in our bodies.

If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, or could become pregnant, you should avoid or rarely eat fish that are high in mercury. The fetus and infants exposed to high levels of mercury may have problems with learning, walking and talking.

### Can I safely eat fish?

If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, or could become pregnant, you can still enjoy the benefits of eating fish if you choose carefully and **eat a variety of fish**. You can also give fish to your children as long as you avoid or rarely feed them fish high in mercury. Use this guide to help choose fish for you and your family.



### Can I eat sport fish?

Sport fish are fish caught in local lakes and rivers. Some of these fish may not be safe to eat. If you eat sport fish, check the *Guide to Eating Ontario Sport Fish* at [www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/guide/index.htm](http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/guide/index.htm) or phone 1-800-820-2716 to get a free copy.

### What about the environmental impact of eating fish?

Toronto Public Health supports food production that is sustainable. Poor fisheries management can result in habitat damage, threats to other aquatic life and overfishing. For more information on making the best environmental fish choices refer to [www.seachoice.org](http://www.seachoice.org).

Health Canada recommends eating at least two Canada's Food Guide Servings of fish each week that are high in omega-3 fats and low in mercury. See *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* at [www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide).



## A Guide To Buying Fish For Women, Children and Families



416.338.7600  
[toronto.ca/health](http://toronto.ca/health)



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### Safe to Eat Every Day (Very Low Mercury)

Basa	Octopus	♥ Salmon (Chum, Coho, Pink, Wild Pacific)
Capelin	Oysters	Sea Urchin
Kamaboko (Fish Cake, Processed White Fish)	Pollock	Silver Pomfret
Milkfish	♥ Salmon, Canned	Tilapia

### Safe to Eat Often (Low Mercury)

♥ Anchovies (Fresh/Frozen)	Mussels (Blue)	Shiner
♥ Arctic Char	Porgie	Smelt (Atlantic, Lake)
♥ Atlantic Mackerel	♥ Salmon (Chinook, Sockeye, Steelhead)	Sole (Dover, Petrale)
Clams	♥ Sardines	Squid
Grass Carp	Sea Cucumber	♥ Trout (Rainbow)
♥ Herring		Tuna, Canned Light

### ! Eco Unfriendly

Atlantic Cod	Haddock	Scallops
Flounder	♥ Salmon (Atlantic, Farmed)	Shrimp/Prawns

### Safe to Eat Sometimes (Medium Mercury)

Black Pomfret	Redfish
Catfish	Sablefish (Black Cod)
Halibut	Skate
Jackfish	Snapper (Various Species)
♥ Kingfish (King Mackerel, Spanish Mackerel)	♥ Trout (Lake, Various Species)
Lake Whitefish	Tuna steak (Skipjack, Southern Yellowfin)
Mahi Mahi (Dolphin Fish)	Tuna, Canned White (Albacore)
Perch	Whiting

### ! Eco Unfriendly

Atlantic Halibut	Grouper
Bluefin Tuna Steak	Red Snapper

### Avoid or Eat Rarely (High Mercury)

Barracuda  
 ⊖ Buffalo  
 ♥ Escolar (Snake Mackerel)  
 Marlin  
 ⊖ Pickerel (Pike, Sauger, Walleye, Yellow Pickerel, Zander)  
 Tilefish  
 Tuna steak (Various Species, Bigeye)

### ! Eco Unfriendly

Sea Bass	Shark
Orange Roughy	Swordfish

### Symbols

\* = A serving size may not be the same size as the portion you eat in a meal. One Canada's Food Guide Serving is 75 grams or 2.5 ounces or about half a cup.

♥ = High omega-3 fats (Good for your heart)

! = Fish that may be caught or farmed in a way that is harmful to the environment ([www.seachoice.org](http://www.seachoice.org))

⊖ = Not high in mercury but high in PCBs

Family Member	Very Low Mercury Fish	Low Mercury Fish	Medium Mercury Fish	High Mercury Fish
Children	1 serving* a day	2 servings* a week	1-2 servings* a month	Less than 1 serving* a month
Women who are pregnant, could become pregnant, or are breastfeeding, teenage girls	2 servings* a day	4 servings* a week	2-4 servings* a month	Less than 1 serving* a month
Men, teenage boys and women 50+	Unlimited servings*	Unlimited servings*	4 servings* a week	No more than 1 serving* a week