



## Healthy Eating: Choose Fish Low in Mercury

Fish is part of a healthy diet. Fish provides many nutrients such as protein, while being low in saturated fat. Fish also provides healthy omega-3 fats, which are good for your heart and brain. Omega-3 fats are important especially for the brain and eye development of babies and children. Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide recommends at least 2 servings of fish each week for children 2 years of age and older and for adults.

### Choose Fish Low in Mercury

The BC Ministry of Health and BC Centre for Disease Control have developed recommendations for choosing and eating fish, specifically for British Columbians. By choosing fish low in mercury, you can get the health benefits of fish while minimizing the amount of mercury.

One Serving is equal to 75 g (2.5 oz.) or 125 mL (1/2 cup)

	Fish Low in Mercury	Person's Age	Serving Limit
<b>Eat Freely</b>	<b>Salmon</b> , wild or farmed, fresh, frozen or canned <b>Shrimp</b> <b>Prawn</b> <b>Rainbow trout</b> <b>Atlantic mackerel</b> <b>Sole or Dover Sole</b> <b>Albacore Tuna</b> , fresh, frozen and canned, from B.C. or Canada	Children 6 to 24 months	No limit
		Children 2 to 12 years	No limit
		Girls and Women of childbearing age, including pregnant and breastfeeding women	No limit
		Men (ages 12 and older) and Women after childbearing years	No limit

	Fish Moderate in Mercury	Person's Age	Serving Limit
<b>Eat in Moderation</b>	<b>Canned Tuna</b> , all varieties, except albacore tuna labelled from B.C. or Canada <b>Albacore Tuna</b> , fresh or frozen (imported) <b>Cod</b> , Atlantic <b>Bass or White Bass</b> <b>Halibut</b> , Pacific <b>Lake Trout</b> <b>Sablefish, Black Cod or Alaskan Black Cod</b> <b>Rockfish</b>	Children 6 to 24 months	2 Servings a month
		Children 2 to 12 years	3 Servings a month
		Girls and Women of childbearing age, including pregnant and breastfeeding women	2 to 4 Servings a week
		Men (ages 12 and older) and Women after childbearing years	4 to 6 Servings a week

	Fish High in Mercury	Person's Age	Serving Limit
<b>Limit</b>	<b>Bigeye Tuna</b> , fresh or frozen (called Ahi Tuna) <b>Shark</b> <b>Marlin</b> <b>Swordfish</b> <b>Sea Bass</b>	Children 6 months to 24 months	Do not eat
		Children 2 years to 12 years	1 Serving a month
		Girls and Women of childbearing age, including pregnant and breastfeeding women	2 Servings a month

	<b>Barracuda</b> <b>Escolar</b> <b>Arctic Char</b> <b>Grayling</b>	Men (ages 12 and older) and Women after childbearing years	4 Servings a month
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## Mercury in Fish

While there are health benefits of eating fish regularly, it is important to know that the mercury levels vary among the types of fish available in B.C.

Mercury is a metal found in the environment. Fish absorb the mercury, which you absorb when you eat the fish. The fish higher in mercury are usually larger fish that eat smaller fish.

Mercury can not be removed or reduced by cleaning, preparing, or cooking fish.

Mercury can damage a growing brain. Pregnant and breastfeeding women, babies and children especially need to limit eating certain types of fish.

## Fish caught by Family and Friends

Mercury levels in fish are not routinely monitored across B.C. lakes and streams because the risk of mercury contamination is generally low. Monitoring has been done where the risk seems higher – for example, where there are reservoirs or natural mercury deposits.

Only three areas in B.C. have mercury advisories. These advisories are for lake trout and bull trout in Jack of Clubs, Pinchi and Williston Lakes.

## Can I eat other types of fish not on the list?

Information about the mercury levels of other types of fish is not available yet. If you enjoy eating fish not included on the lists, do not eat large amounts of the same fish very often. Instead, eat a variety of fish.

## For More Information

Health Canada's Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide at  
[www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide)

**For more nutrition information, call 8-1-1 to speak with a registered dietitian.**



BC Centre for Disease Control  
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