

NUTRIGRAM

October 2007

FISH: FRIEND OR FOE?

Fish have been in the spotlight a lot lately and all of the information can seem confusing. First we hear that fish is good for us and we should eat more of it. Then we hear that fish is full of mercury and we should avoid eating it. Then there is news that we are eating too much fish and the oceans are becoming depleted. With all of this conflicting information, how do we know whether fish is a good or bad choice?

Is fish a healthy choice?

Fish provides a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, which can be important for lowering heart disease risk and improving overall health. Fish is also a great source of protein, zinc and iron and is low in saturated fat.

Are some fish unhealthy?

Unfortunately, the waters that many fish live in have become contaminated with potentially dangerous chemicals like mercury or PCBs. As a result, some fish contain levels of these contaminants that could be harmful to people who eat them. Larger fish that have lived longer and are higher up on the food chain tend to have the highest levels of contaminants because they've had more time to accumulate them.

What about sustainable fish?

Some of the fish that we enjoy are in danger of disappearing from our oceans because of certain fishing practices. To help keep our oceans healthy and full of a variety of fish, choose fish that are classified as "sustainable".

How to choose fish that is good for you and the ocean:

The Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch program provides easy to follow guides to making seafood choices that support healthy oceans. The guides also include information on which seafood should be limited because they may contain mercury or other contaminants. You can view or print the seafood recommendations for your area at their website: www.seafoodwatch.org. Also, look for the Ocean Friendly icon on seafood served in your dining room that will let you know that it was selected following the Seafood Watch guidelines.



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Monthly SUPERFOODS Promotion

The poster has a blue background with a fish head on the left and a fish tail on the right. It features the text "omega-3 fatty acids" and "Omega-3 fatty acids" in various fonts and colors. The word "FISH" is written in large, bold, yellow letters. Below it, it says "It's good for your heart!" and "go fish!". A dark blue box contains the text: "All fish, but in particular fatty fish, such as salmon and tuna are packed with OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS. Two servings a week may help prevent heart disease and stroke." The word "SUPERFOODS" is written in a stylized font at the bottom right.

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SUPERFOODS

Answers to your questions online...

"Ask the Food & Nutrition Experts"

(In the Flik Independent Schools section)

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