

Facts about Mercury in Fish

- ❖ **You can't smell or taste mercury in fish.** That's why it's important to know which fish are safer to eat than others. Mercury can come from natural and man-made sources. Mercury in the air settles into lakes, rivers and oceans where it is consumed by small organisms. When fish eat these organisms, they are also eating the mercury they contain. This is how mercury builds up in the flesh of fish.
- ❖ **Small amounts of mercury can damage a brain that is just starting to form and grow.** That's why young children, babies in the womb, and breast-fed babies are most at risk. Too much mercury may affect the child's behavior and lead to learning problems later in life.
- ❖ **Mercury can also harm older children and adults.** Older children and adults can experience symptoms of numbness, tingling, memory loss, and vision changes following exposure to mercury through fish consumption.
- ❖ **Women who are pregnant, nursing, or planning to be pregnant & children under age 6** require more protective advice on fish consumption than others, and should refer to specific guidelines

To Learn More...

About how mercury contaminates fish, watch this video online, at: www.dartmouth.edu/~toxmetal/mercury-source-to-seafood/index.html

About mercury concerns for pregnant women, visit this website: www.momscleanairforce.org/resources/how-mercury-poisoning-works/

About consuming canned tuna fish, use this Tuna Calculator, at: www.ewg.org/research/tuna-calculator

About mercury and other contaminants in Vermont gamefish, please consult the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, Mercury Education & Reduction Campaign.

Online at: www.mercvt.org
Call, toll-free, at: (802) 241-3455

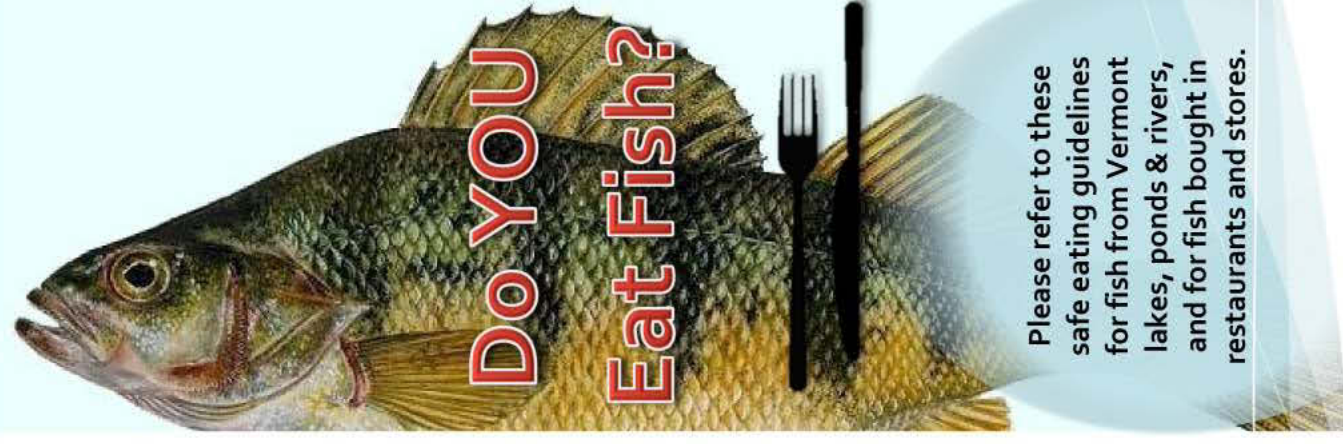
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A special thanks to the WI Department of Health and Family Services & the VT Department of Environmental Conservation



For A HEART Healthy Diet, Remember:

- ✓ **SIZE:** Choose *smaller*, younger fish. Larger, older fish are more likely to contain higher levels of contaminants.
- ✓ **SPECIES:** Eat a *variety*. Fish that eat other fish tend to build up more contaminants.
- ✓ **SOURCE:** Know *where* your fish comes from. Fish from select lakes and rivers have fewer contaminants than others.
- ✓ **SELECTION:** Because you can't trim, clean or cook the mercury out of fish, it is important to know which fish are safer to eat than others.



Please refer to these safe eating guidelines for fish from Vermont lakes, ponds & rivers, and for fish bought in restaurants and stores.

Lake Champlain Sea Grant
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LAKE
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Safe Eating Guidelines

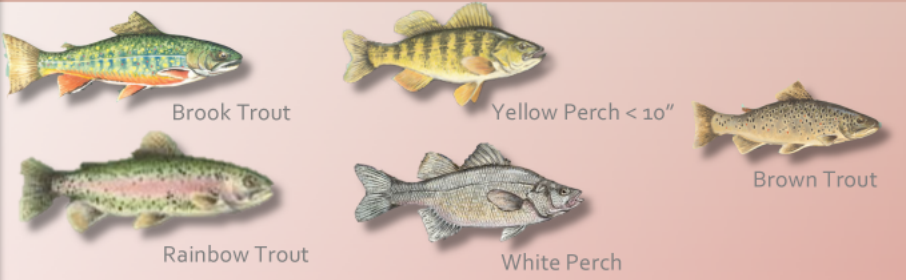
These are general guidelines based on mercury levels measured in fish throughout Vermont and mercury levels found in commercial

LOW



Light canned tuna is made with smaller species of tuna than in white canned tuna, therefore, **light canned tuna has 3 times less potential mercury** than white canned tuna. A typical can of tuna is 3-5 ounces, so 1 meal = 2 cans

MERCURY






LEVELS



HIGH



 Women who are pregnant, nursing, or planning to be pregnant & children under age 6	 All other individuals	 Example of a safe eating plan for a pregnant woman
6 meals per month	9-10 meals per month	If you eat ...
3-4 meals per	8 meals per month	1 meal of
2 meals per	9 meals per	...You should only eat 2-3 more meals of fish that month from a category lower in mercury.
2 meals per	4-6 meals per	For example, you could safely eat 1 meal of Canned Light Tuna & 1 meal of shellfish for the rest of that month
1 meal per	3 meals per	
NO meals per	1 meal per	

One meal = one-half pound (8 ounces) of uncooked fish for a 150-pound person.

Meal sizes for people weighing less may be adjusted accordingly (e.g. a 75-pound person's meal size is one-quarter pound of uncooked fish).

Do NOT exceed the maximum number of meals per category, per month. If you choose to combine meals from different categories, **limit yourself to the lower number of meals** of those categories