

The Power of FISH in Your Diet

The Hook



Heart-healthy omega-3s

Health experts have long recommended eating at least 2 servings of fish each week for heart health. This is because fish contain essential omega-3 fatty acids. But there are so many choices – and concerns about toxins – to consider. Here is some help in navigating the ocean (and lake!) of fish choices to get the recommended amount of omega-3 in your diet.

Omega-3 improves cardiovascular health* and lowers the risk of death for people with cardiovascular disease and abnormal heart rhythms by:

- Reducing the risk of blood clots
- Keeping plaque from forming on the arteries
- Decreasing triglyceride levels in the blood
- Lowering blood pressure slightly
- Slowing production of substances that cause inflammation in the body

* Stick to recommended levels of omega-3 fatty acids > 3 grams each day can lead to bleeding



The Line



How much fish should you eat?

A serving (3 oz.) is about the size of a pack of cards.

No history of heart disease:

At least 6-8 oz. a week (about 2 servings)

FDA guidelines say healthy adults can eat up to 12 oz. of fish each week

If you have heart disease:

About 1 gram of omega-3 per day
Your doctor may recommend supplements

It varies based on condition.
Check with your doctor

Best fish sources of omega-3 fatty acids

3 oz. Serving Size	Omega-3 Fat
Mackerel (Atlantic)	2.5 - 2.6g
Salmon (Atlantic & farmed)	1.8g
Herring	1.7 - 1.2g
Tuna – Bluefin	1.6g
Lake Trout	1.6 - 1.3g
Catfish (farmed)	1.15g
Anchovy	1.4g
Tuna – Albacore	1.3g
Lake White Fish (freshwater)	1.3g
Sardines	1.3g
Bluefish	1.2g
Halibut	0.9g
Pollock	0.9g
Striped Bass	0.8g
Sea Bass (mixed species)	0.65g
Tuna, white meat canned (drained)	0.5g
Flounder or Sole	0.48g
Shrimp	0.29g



Tip: Eat a variety of fish to help minimize potentially adverse effects of mercury and environmental pollutants.



Tip: Research says farm-raised fish may be more harmful due to antibiotics, pesticides and other chemicals.



Tip: Check local and state advisories about the safety of fish caught in local lakes, rivers and coastal areas.

The Sinker



What about the environmental toxins in fish?

The risks of eating fish vary depending age and health.

The American Heart Association says benefits of eating fish outweigh the risks for most healthy adults. Just stay within the FDA and EPA guidelines.

Children and women who are pregnant or nursing should avoid eating fish high in mercury.

Some fish contain higher levels of mercury and environmental toxins.

The WORST offenders are these older and larger fish:

- Shark
- Swordfish
- Tilefish (golden bass or golden snapper)
- King mackerel

5 popular fish (or shellfish) LOWER in mercury:

- Shrimp
- Canned light tuna
- Salmon
- Pollock
- Catfish



Tip: Possible exposure to toxins can be reduced by removing skin and surface fat before cooking.

Don't like fish – or you're allergic to it?

Plant-based foods also contain omega-3 fatty acids (ALA) in much smaller amounts than fish.

Try these foods:

- Flaxseed (milled or oil)
- Walnuts
- Soy foods
- Canola oil
- Algae/algae oil
- Foods fortified with omega-3 algae oil

Adding these to your diet has some heart-health benefits. But there are no established serving-size recommendations to get your omega-3.

Sources

my.clevelandclinic.org/services/heart/prevention/nutrition/food-choices/omega-3-fatty-acids
ndb.nal.usda.gov/ndb/



Cleveland Clinic

clevelandclinic.org/HealthHub