

# Advice About Eating Fish

## What Pregnant Women & Parents Should Know

Fish and other protein-rich foods have nutrients that can help your child's growth and development.

For women of childbearing age (about 16-49 years old), especially pregnant and breastfeeding women, and for parents and caregivers of young children.

- Eat 2 to 3 servings of fish a week from the "Best Choices" list OR 1 serving from the "Good Choices" list.
- Eat a variety of fish.
- Serve 1 to 2 servings of fish a week to children, starting at age 2.
- If you eat fish caught by family or friends, check for fish advisories. If there is no advisory, eat only one serving and no other fish that week.\*

## Use this chart!

You can use this chart to help you choose which fish to eat, and how often to eat them, based on their mercury levels. The "Best Choices" have the lowest levels of mercury.

### What is a serving?



For an adult  
4 ounces



For children,  
ages 4 to 7  
2 ounces

To find out, use the palm of your hand!

### Best Choices EAT 2 TO 3 SERVINGS A WEEK

Anchovy	Herring	Scallop
Atlantic croaker	Lobster, American and spiny	Shad
Atlantic mackerel	Mullet	Shrimp
Black sea bass	Oyster	Skate
Butterfish	Pacific chub mackerel	Smelt
Catfish	Perch, freshwater and ocean	Sole
Clam	Pickering	Squid
Cod	Plaice	Tilapia
Crab	Pollock	Trout, freshwater
Crawfish	Salmon	Tuna, canned light (includes skipjack)
Flounder	Sardine	Whitefish
Haddock		Whiting
Hake		

OR

### Good Choices EAT 1 SERVING A WEEK

Bluefish	Monkfish	Tilefish (Atlantic Ocean)
Buffalofish	Rockfish	Tuna, albacore/white tuna, canned and fresh/frozen
Carp	Sablefish	Tuna, yellowfin
Chilean sea bass/Patagonian toothfish	Sheepshead	Weakfish/seatrout
Grouper	Snapper	White croaker/Pacific croaker
Halibut	Spanish mackerel	
Mahi mahi/dolphinfish	Striped bass (ocean)	

### Choices to Avoid HIGHEST MERCURY LEVELS

King mackerel	Shark	Tilefish (Gulf of Mexico)
Marlin	Swordfish	Tuna, bigeye
Orange roughy		

\*Some fish caught by family and friends, such as larger carp, catfish, trout and perch, are more likely to have fish advisories due to mercury or other contaminants. State advisories will tell you how often you can safely eat those fish.

[www.FDA.gov/fishadvice](http://www.FDA.gov/fishadvice)

[www.EPA.gov/fishadvice](http://www.EPA.gov/fishadvice)



# FoodSafety.gov

## Checklist of Foods to Avoid During Pregnancy

Because pregnancy affects your immune system, you and your unborn baby are more susceptible to the bacteria, viruses, and parasites that cause foodborne illness. Even if you don't feel sick, some "bugs" like *Listeria* and *Toxoplasma* can infect your baby and cause serious health problems. Your baby is also sensitive to toxins from the food that you eat, such as mercury in certain kinds of fish.

Keep this checklist handy to help ensure that you and your unborn baby stay healthy and safe. And invest in a food thermometer to check the temperatures of cooked food.

Don't Eat These Foods	Why	What to Do
<b>Soft CHEESES made from unpasteurized milk, including Brie, feta, Camembert, Roquefort, queso blanco, and queso fresco</b>	May contain <i>E. coli</i> or <i>Listeria</i> .	Eat hard cheeses, such as cheddar or Swiss. Or, check the label and make sure that the cheese is made from pasteurized milk.
<b>Raw COOKIE DOUGH or CAKE BATTER</b>	May contain <i>Salmonella</i> .	Bake the cookies and cake. Don't lick the spoon!
<b>King mackerel, marlin, orange roughy, shark, swordfish, tilefish (Gulf of Mexico), and tuna (big eye)</b>	Contain high levels of mercury, but there are many other choices of fish that have lower levels of mercury.	See this <a href="#">fish advice chart</a> that has 36 "best choices" and 19 "good choices" of fish to eat while pregnant.
<b>Raw or undercooked FISH (sushi)</b>	May contain parasites or bacteria.	Cook fish to 145° F.
<b>Unpasteurized JUICE or cider (including fresh squeezed)</b>	May contain <i>E. coli</i> .	Drink pasteurized juice. Bring unpasteurized juice or cider to a rolling boil and boil for at least 1 minute before drinking.
<b>Unpasteurized MILK</b>	May contain bacteria such as <i>Campylobacter</i> , <i>E. coli</i> , <i>Listeria</i> , or <i>Salmonella</i> .	Drink pasteurized milk.
<b>SALADS made in a store, such as ham salad, chicken salad, and seafood salad.</b>	May contain <i>Listeria</i> .	Make salads at home, following the food safety basics: clean, separate, cook, and chill.
<b>Raw SHELLFISH, such as oysters and clams</b>	May contain <i>Vibrio</i> bacteria.	Cook shellfish to 145° F.
<b>Raw or undercooked SPROUTS, such as alfalfa, clover, mung bean, and radish</b>	May contain <i>E. coli</i> or <i>Salmonella</i> .	Cook sprouts thoroughly.

Be Careful with These Foods	Why	What to Do
<b>Hot dogs, luncheon meats, cold cuts, fermented or dry sausage, and other deli-style meat and poultry</b>	May contain <i>Listeria</i> .	Even if the label says that the meat is precooked, reheat these meats to steaming hot or 165° F before eating.
<b>Eggs and pasteurized egg products</b>	Undercooked eggs may contain <i>Salmonella</i> .	Cook eggs until yolks are firm. Cook casseroles and other dishes containing eggs or egg products to 160° F.
<b>Eggnog</b>	Homemade eggnog may contain uncooked eggs, which may contain <i>Salmonella</i> .	Make eggnog with a pasteurized egg product or buy pasteurized eggnog. When you make eggnog or other egg-fortified beverages, cook to 160°F
<b>Fish</b>	May contain parasites or bacteria.	Cook fish to 145° F.
<b>Ice cream</b>	Homemade ice cream may contain uncooked eggs, which may contain <i>Salmonella</i> .	Make ice cream with a pasteurized egg product safer by adding the eggs to the amount of liquid called for in the recipe, then heating the mixture thoroughly..
<b>Meat: Beef, veal, lamb, and pork (including ground meat)</b>	Undercooked meat may contain <i>E. coli</i> .	Cook beef, veal, and lamb steaks and roasts to 145° F. Cook pork to 160° F. Cook all ground meats to 160° F.
<b>Meat spread or pate</b>	Unpasteurized refrigerated pates or meat spreads may contain <i>Listeria</i> .	Eat canned versions, which are safe.
<b>Poultry and stuffing (including ground poultry)</b>	Undercooked meat may contain bacteria such as <i>Campylobacter</i> or <i>Salmonella</i> .	Cook poultry to 165° F. If the poultry is stuffed, cook the stuffing to 165° F. Better yet, cook the stuffing separately.
<b>Smoked seafood</b>	Refrigerated versions are not safe, unless they have been cooked to 165° F.	Eat canned versions, which are safe, or cook to 165° F.