

**Commodities Newsletter**

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Newsletter provided by:

**SNAP-Ed Program**  
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For questions regarding the commodities, please call 269-445-0231.

This project has been partially funded with Federal funds from the USDA, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) by way of the MI Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Family Nutrition Program (FNP) at Michigan State University. SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income; it can help to buy nutritious foods for a better diet. FNP provides nutrition education to SNAP participants. To find out more, contact your local DHS office, check online at <http://www.mfia.state.mi.us/mars/index.asp>. In Michigan, you can also call the Center for Civil Justice Food Stamp Hotline (1-800-481-4989).

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**Eating Fish:  
Making Healthy Choices**

*University of Nevada Cooperative Extension*

**Mercury in Fish:  
What is the Issue?**

Mercury is found naturally in soil, air and water. Certain industries also release mercury into the environment. These include the production of cement and coal-fired power and mining. However, humans are exposed to mercury at levels of concern primarily by eating fish. Certain fish types, including fish that are long-lived or larger, and fish that feed on other fish, tend to build up the most mercury.

In most cases, the risk of health problems from eating fish containing mercury is low. However, mercury is a concern for women who are trying to become pregnant, who are pregnant or breastfeeding, and for small children. Mercury can be passed from the pregnant mother to her baby. It can also pass into her breast milk. Mercury can harm a baby's or young child's brain and cause learning problems.

**To Limit Mercury**

- ♥ Choose fish that are lower in mercury
- ♥ Do not eat fish that are high in mercury
- ♥ Eat smaller fish
- ♥ Eat a variety of lower-mercury fish

- ♥ Avoid large fish servings if you eat fish often (more than twice a week)

**What is a Serving?**

For adults—the recommended cooked serving of fish is about the size and thickness of the palm of your hand.

For children— give them smaller servings.

**What Fish are Better Choices?**

Fish that are high in omega-3 fatty acids and low in mercury will provide the most health benefit. The following list shows types of fish that are lower in mercury but high in the healthy omega-3 fatty acids (“best choices”), “other low-mercury choices”, and “high-mercury fish to avoid” that pregnant women and small children should not eat.

**Best Choices**

- Herring
- Salmon
- Sardines
- Trout
- Canned chunk light tuna

**Other Low-mercury Choices**

- Catfish
- Flounder or sole
- Shrimp

Tilapia

### **High-mercury Fish to Avoid**

King mackerel

Shark

Swordfish

Tilefish

White albacore tuna or tuna steak—limit amounts according to the recommendations listed below.

### **How Much Fish Should I Eat?**

#### **Women who are pregnant, may become pregnant or are breastfeeding**

Fish is a healthy addition to the diet of a pregnant woman. It helps her meet her increased nutrition needs. The fatty acids in fish ensure healthy eye and brain development of the baby and young child.

#### **Recommendations:**

- ♥ Eat two fish meals a week, each about 3 ounces cooked weight, or up to a safe total of 12 ounces a week.
- ♥ This can include up to 6 ounces of white albacore tuna or tuna steak each week.
- ♥ Do not eat shark, swordfish, tilefish, king mackerel and any raw fish.
- ♥ Check and follow local advisories about the safety of locally caught fish, or limit to one fish meal a week total.

#### **Children up to 12 years of age**

**Recommendations:** These are the same as above, except that a child's serving size may be smaller as age-appropriate, up to a safe total of 12 ounces a week.

#### **Adolescents and adult men and women (who will not become pregnant)**

##### **Recommendations for heart health:**

- ♥ Eat two fish meals a week, or up to 12 ounces cooked weight a week.
- ♥ If more than two servings (or more than 12 ounces) a week are eaten, select a variety of types of fish.

### **Eat Fish for Your Health**

There are many healthy reasons to eat fish. Fish has good-quality protein and vitamins and minerals. It is also low in saturated fat and calories. Eating fish once or twice a week in place of beef and pork can lower your intake of total and saturated fats.

The fat in certain fish like salmon, trout, herring, mackerel, sardines and tuna gives us healthy omega-3 fatty acids. These fatty acids in oily fish help keep your heart healthy and reduce stroke risk. They do this by lowering blood fats called triglycerides as well as artery-damaging inflammation. There is good evidence that eating fish during pregnancy may improve brain and nerve development of the baby. It also contributes to eye health across the lifespan.

Health risks linked with eating fish include exposure to mercury or other contaminants in certain fish. It is generally believed that the benefits of eating fish, in most cases, outweigh the risks. Choosing the fish listed in the *What Fish are Better Choices* section can help reduce any risk.

#### **Handle Fish with Care**

Fish is easy to prepare. However, following a few simple steps is important for both taste and safety. Handle fish as little and as gently as possible before, during and after cooking for best texture and appearance.

Whether you buy or catch your fish, cook it within two days or freeze it immediately. If frozen thaw it in the refrigerator overnight. Rinse it in cold water, drain and pat dry.

Overcooked fish can be dry and unappealing. However, eating raw and undercooked fish raises food safety risks. This is especially true for pregnant women, children, the elderly and those with poor immune function. To be safe, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration says to always cook fish to an internal temperature of 145° F or until the fish flakes easily and is opaque.

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### **Web Sites:**

#### **American Heart Association**

<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=4632>

#### **U.S. EPA Fish Advisories**

<http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/fish>

#### **U.S. EPA Mercury**

<http://www.epa.gov/mercury/advisories.htm>

#### **Michigan Fish & Game Advisory**

<http://www.michigan.gov/fishandgameadvisory>

## RECIPES

### **Tuna Quesadillas**

2 cans drained tuna fish, packed in water  
2 Tbl light mayonnaise  
8 corn tortillas (4-5")  
1 c grated mozzarella cheese

1. Mix tuna with mayonnaise

#### **Microwave:**

2. Spoon tuna mixture onto half of each tortilla.
3. Top with cheese and fold tortilla in half.
4. Microwave on high for 60 seconds. Turn the plate halfway through cooking time.

#### **Stove:**

2. Divide mixture onto two tortillas.
3. Top with cheese and the remaining two tortillas.
4. Spray a skillet with non-stick cooking spray. Brown quesadillas on both sides.
5. Cut in half before serving.

You can substitute chicken for tuna!

4 servings, 2 quesadillas per serving—Calories per serving 280, fat calories 110, cholesterol 55 mg, sodium 320 mg, carbs 14 g, protein 30 g

Source: Utah State University Cooperative Extension

### **Tuna Noodle Casserole**

2 1/2 c shell pasta, uncooked  
1 tsp vegetable oil  
1 medium onion, chopped  
7 whole mushrooms, sliced  
1 (10 3/4 oz) can cream of mushroom soup  
1 (7 oz) can water packed tuna, drained  
1/2 tsp ground celery seed  
1/8 tsp each salt and pepper  
1/2 tsp ground dill weed  
1/4 tsp garlic powder  
1/8 tsp cayenne pepper  
1/4 c low-fat milk  
1/3 c parmesan cheese, grated  
1 c frozen peas  
2 Tbl dry bread crumbs

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. Cook pasta according to package directions in boiling water.
3. In a large skillet, add oil over medium heat, add onions and cook until soft.
4. Add sliced mushrooms. Reduce heat to low, cover skillet and cook until mushrooms are tender.
5. Add remaining ingredients, except bread crumbs. Stir to combine.
6. Add cooked and drained pasta to mixture. Toss to mix.
7. Pour into casserole dish. Sprinkle with bread crumbs.
8. Bake uncovered at 350° for 15 minutes or until bubbly.
9. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

You can substitute grated cheddar cheese for the parmesan cheese.

7 servings, 1 cup each.—Calories per serving 260, fat calories 50, cholesterol 10 mg, sodium 530 mg, carbs 36 g, protein 17 g

Source: Oregon State University Extension Service

## Spanish Baked Fish

1 lb. white fish (cod, haddock or flounder)  
Vegetable oil cooking spray  
1 c tomato sauce  
1/2 c onions, sliced  
1/2 tsp garlic powder  
2 tsp chili powder  
1 tsp dried oregano flakes  
1/2 tsp ground cumin

1. If using frozen fish thaw in refrigerator according to package directions.
2. Preheat oven to 350°. Spray baking dish with cooking spray.
3. Separate fish into four fillets or pieces. Arrange fish in baking dish.
4. Mix remaining ingredients together and pour evenly over fish.
5. Bake until fish flakes easily with fork, about 10-20 minutes.

### TIPS:

- Serve with a green vegetable and brown rice.
- Fish is naturally low in fat and calories.
- Thaw frozen fish in refrigerator.
- Store fish on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator.

Serves 4. Serving size: 1/4 recipe. Calories: 120, fruits and vegetables—1 serving, fat—1.5 g, fiber 2 g  
UMass Extension Nutrition Education Program

## Fish Tacos

### *Fish:*

2 lbs cod fillets  
3 Tbl lime juice (about 2 limes)  
1 tomato, chopped  
1/2 onion, chopped  
3 Tbl cilantro, chopped  
1 tsp olive oil  
1/4 tsp cayenne pepper (optional)  
1/4 tsp black pepper  
1/4 tsp salt

### *Slaw:*

2 c red cabbage, shredded  
1/2 c green onions, chopped  
3/4 c nonfat sour cream  
3/4 c salsa

8 6-inch corn tortillas

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. Rinse fish and place on rack in baking dish, to drain fat off fish.
3. Mix lime juice, tomato, onion, cilantro, olive oil, peppers, & salt and spoon on top of fillets.
4. Cover loosely with aluminum foil to keep fish moist.
5. Bake 15-20 minutes or until fish flakes.
6. Mix cabbage and onion; mix sour cream and salsa and add to cabbage mixture.
7. Divide fish among tortillas. Add 1/4 cup of slaw to each. Fold over and enjoy!
8. Refrigerate leftovers within 2-3 hours.

Serves 8, 1 per serving. Calories 180, fat calories 20, cholesterol 40 mg, sodium 280 mg, carbohydrates 20 g, protein 21 g.

Source: OSU Extension Service

## Quick Tuna Tetrazzini

8 oz spaghetti  
1 can cream of mushroom soup  
2 oz sliced mushrooms, canned  
1 c evaporated milk  
13 oz tuna in water, canned—drained & flaked  
1 c soft bread crumbs  
1/4 c grated parmesan cheese  
2 Tbl margarine, melted

1. Break spaghetti into small pieces (2-3"); cook according to package directions.
2. Combine soup, mushrooms, evaporated milk and tuna.
3. Drain spaghetti and combine with mushroom-tuna mixture.
4. Pour into greased 2 1/2 quart casserole.
5. Mix bread crumbs, cheese, and melted margarine; sprinkle on top of mixture in casserole.

6. Bake at 400° F for 45-60 minutes or until browned and bubbly.

6 servings. Per serving—361 calories, 11 g fat, 26 g protein, 38 g carbohydrates, 1 g dietary fiber, 34 mg cholesterol, 614 mg sodium.

Source: <http://www.uvm.edu>

## Tuna Macaroni Salad

### Salad:

- 3/4 c carrots, washed and grated
- 3/5 c celery, chopped
- 1 c macaroni, uncooked
- 2 hard-cooked eggs, chopped
- 2 6-oz cans tuna, water-packed, drained

### Dressing:

- 1/2 c mayonnaise-type salad dressing, low-fat
- 2 Tbl onion, minced
- 1/4 tsp black pepper

1. Wash and prepare celery and carrots.
2. Boil water. Add macaroni and cook until tender, 6-8 minutes. Drain.
3. Combine cooked macaroni, tuna, eggs, celery, and carrots in a large bowl.
4. Stir together salad dressing, onion, and pepper.
5. Pour dressing over salad and toss. Chill until ready to serve.

### Tips:

- Serve with green salad or vegetable soup, and fruit slices.
- Great for a picnic. Be sure to keep it cold.

Serves 4. Serving size—1 cup. Calories 330, fat 9 g, fiber 3 g; fruits and vegetables: 1 serving.

Source: UMass Extension Nutrition Education Program

## Easy Fish Chowder

- 2 c reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1 Tbl trans-fat free margarine
- 1/2 c finely chopped onion
- 2 medium potatoes, peeled and diced into 1/2" cubes
- 2 medium carrots, peeled and chopped into slightly smaller pieces than potato cubes.
- 1 lb. boneless, milk-flavored fish fillets (tilapia or haddock), cut into 1" pieces (thaw fish overnight in the refrigerator, in its original package and on a plate on the bottom shelf).
- 1/4 tsp dried leafy thyme, crushed
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 2 c milk, low-fat or fat-free
- Salt to taste

1. Add chicken broth, margarine, onion, potatoes, carrots, fish, thyme and pepper to a large saucepan. Cover and bring broth to a boil over medium heat.
2. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, until the vegetables are tender and the fish flakes easily with a fork, about 10-12 minutes.
3. Add the milk. Cook chowder over medium heat, uncovered and stirring occasionally. Heat until the chowder begins to bubble and is heated through.
4. If desired — add salt, to taste.

### Notes—

1. By having the onion, carrots, potatoes and fish the different sizes listed in the recipe, it's possible to add them at the same time and let them cook together.
2. Lifting the lid to peek into a pan releases heat, making the food take longer to cook.
3. Crushing the thyme just before using it will release added flavor.
4. Transfer any leftover chowder to shallow containers, making sure chowder is not more than 2 inches deep. Refrigerate promptly. When serving soup a second time, reheat it until it's steaming hot throughout, at least 165°F. For best safety, eat within a day or two.

Source: <http://food.unl.edu/web/fnh/seafood-chowder>