

Eat Fish Often?

A Minnesota Guide to Eating Fish

Safe Eating Guidelines

Most fish are healthy to eat. Fish are a great way to get protein and good fats, but any fish (store-bought or locally-caught) could have contaminants such as mercury that can harm human health – especially children and fetuses.

Statewide Safe-Eating Guidelines



= Pregnant women, Women who could become pregnant, and Children under age 15



= Men, Boys age 15 and over, and Women not planning to become pregnant

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Species	4 servings per week*	1 serving per week	1 serving per month	Do not eat
Bass				
Bullhead				
Catfish				
Cisco (Lake Herring)				
Crappie				
Inland Stream Trout (Brook, Brown, Rainbow)				
Lake Trout				
Lake Whitefish				
Muskellunge				
Northern Pike				
Sunfish				
Walleye				
Yellow Perch				
Other Species Not Listed				

What to do?

- Eat fish - Benefits outweigh risks if you follow the Safe-Eating Guidelines.
- Spread out fish meals over time - contaminants take time to leave your body.
- Check Waterbody Specific Safe-Eating Guidelines.



Fish from some waters have higher levels of contaminants. Eat these fish less often than the Statewide Safe-Eating Guidelines.

* previously unrestricted

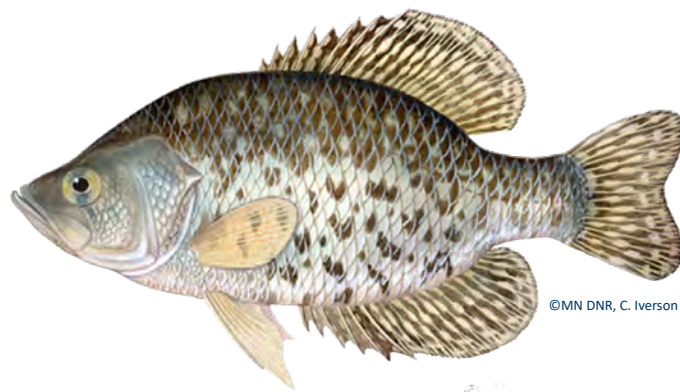
How clean a lake looks is not a sign of how safe the fish are to eat.

Mercury is found in most fish - locally-caught and store-bought. Fish from lakes in northeastern Minnesota generally have more mercury than in southern and central Minnesota. How much mercury is in fish depends on:

- Species. Some fish have more mercury than others because of what they eat and how long they live - Bass, Northern and Walleye have higher levels than Panfish.
- Size. Smaller fish generally have less mercury than larger, older fish of the same species. Unlike people, fish do not get rid of mercury.

Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS) is found at low levels in fish throughout the state. Higher levels have been found in fish from some waters in the metro and Duluth areas.

Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) are highest in fatty fish such as Carp, Catfish, and Lake Trout from major rivers and Lake Superior.



More Resources

Fish Consumption Guidance

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/fish>

- Information in Other Languages
- Waterbody Specific Safe-Eating Guidelines
- What is a Serving?

Contaminants and Minnesota Fish

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/fish/faq.html>

Mercury

<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/mercury>

Perfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/hazardous/topics/pfcs.html>

LakeFinder

<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lakefind/index.html>

Eating your catch can be part of a healthy, balanced diet. Fish are generally low in unhealthy saturated fats and high in protein. Fish contain vitamins and minerals and are the primary food source for healthy omega-3 fats.

Studies suggest that omega-3 fats may be beneficial during fetal brain and eye development, and eating modest amounts of fish containing these healthy fats may lower the risk of heart disease in adults. Health experts recommend that fish be included as part of a healthy diet.