

As part of a healthy eating pattern, eating fish may also offer heart health benefits and lower the risk of obesity.



## Nutritional Value of Fish

The [2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#) recommends:

- At least 8 ounces of seafood (less for young children) per week based on a 2,000 calorie diet
- Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding to consume between 8 and 12 ounces of a variety of seafood per week, from choices that are lower in mercury.

Fish are part of a [healthy eating pattern](#) and provide:

- Protein
- Healthy omega-3 fats (called DHA and EPA)
- More vitamin B<sub>12</sub> and vitamin D than any other type of food
- Iron which is important for infants, young children, and women who are pregnant or who could become pregnant
- Other minerals like selenium, zinc, and iodine.

## Choose a variety of fish that are lower in mercury.

While it is important to limit mercury in the diets of women who are pregnant and breastfeeding and young children, many types of fish are both nutritious and lower in mercury.

**This chart can help you choose which fish to eat, and how often to eat them, based on their mercury levels.**

**What is a serving?** As a guide, use the palm of your hand.



**For an adult**  
**1 serving = 4 ounces**

Eat 2 to 3 servings a week from the "Best Choices" list (OR 1 serving from the "Good Choices" list).



**For children,**  
**a serving is**  
**1 ounce at age 2**  
**and increases with age**  
**to 4 ounces by age 11.**

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.\*

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

### Choices to Avoid

HIGHEST MERCURY LEVELS

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

## Nutrition for Pregnancy

Eating healthy during pregnancy will benefit you and your baby. Eat a balanced diet with no more than 30% of your calories from fat and avoid simple sugars. Reducing your salt intake and drinking plenty of water will help reduce swelling. Try to drink at least 8 glasses of water a day. This can help reduce constipation and can prevent pre-term labor. Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables and avoiding sweets and starchy foods. Limit your caffeine intake to less than 200 milligrams per day.

You need to make sure you get enough protein by eating lean meats, eggs, legumes and fish. However, fish consumption should be limited to 12 ounces per week of store bought fish, including shellfish, or 6 ounces of fresh-caught fish. There are certain fish you should avoid because of their high mercury content. These fish include tilefish, swordfish, king mackerel and shark. For more information, go to [ewg.org](http://ewg.org)

You should limit your cheese intake to pasteurized cheeses only and avoid soft imported cheeses. Also, avoid cold hot dogs and cold lunch meats and uncooked smoked seafood. These foods may carry a bacteria called Listeria that could be harmful.

Make sure you get between 1200-1500 mg of calcium per day. Skim milk and leafy greens are a good source of calcium but if you can't get enough from food, taking a calcium supplement is sometimes necessary.

A good goal for your pregnancy diet is to eat foods that are high in nutrition, like fruits and vegetables. Avoid foods that are empty calories like sweets and sodas. Don't attempt a weight loss diet without discussing it with your doctor.

Taking a prenatal vitamin is usually recommended for all pregnant and breastfeeding women. Over-the-counter prenatal vitamins are essentially the same as prescription prenatal vitamins. Folic acid reduces the risk of neural tube defects and if possible should be taken three months before a woman becomes pregnant. Sometime vitamins can make nausea worse. If taking prenatal vitamins makes you too nauseated, try to at least take some folic acid instead. Folic acid can be found in orange juice and fortified cereals.

## **Nausea and Vomiting During Pregnancy**

Most women experience “morning sickness” during pregnancy.

Though it is commonly called “morning sickness” symptoms can happen throughout the day. The severity of symptoms can range from mild to severe, and nausea is usually worse during the first trimester. Most women start feeling better around the fourth or fifth month but symptoms can continue for some women throughout the entire pregnancy.

### **Treatment**

Reducing the size of meals and eating more frequently can prevent nausea because sometimes an empty stomach can trigger it. Eating bland foods that are low in sugar but high in carbohydrates and protein can also help. Sometimes sucking on something that causes frequent swallowing like ice chips or sunflower seeds can also lessen nausea.

While some over-the-counter remedies such as Ginger, Vitamin B6, and Acupressure can offer some relief, sometimes prescriptions are necessary to control nausea. These can include Antihistamines, Dopamine antagonists and Serotonin antagonists.

Talk to your doctor before taking any medications during pregnancy.