

Seafood Dietary Guidelines

SEAFOOD IS HEALTH FOOD

Mean intake of seafood in the United States is approximately 3 1/2 ounces per week, and increased intake is recommended. Seafood contributes a range of nutrients, notably the omega-3 fatty acids, eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA).

Moderate evidence shows that consumption of about 8 ounces per week of a variety of seafood, which provide an average consumption of 250 mg per day of EPA and DHA, is associated with reduced cardiac deaths among individuals with and without pre-existing cardiovascular disease.

Moderate, consistent evidence shows that the health benefits from consuming a variety of seafood in the amounts recommended outweigh the health risks associated with methyl mercury, a heavy metal found in seafood in varying levels.

Benefits are maximized with seafood higher in EPA and DHA but lower in methyl mercury. In addition, eating a variety of seafood, as opposed to just a few choices, is likely to reduce the amount of methyl mercury consumed from any one seafood type.

Individuals who regularly consume more than the recommended amounts of seafood should choose a mix of seafood that emphasizes choices relatively low in methyl mercury.

For a list of common seafood varieties consumed in the United States with the EPA+DHA and mercury content in a 4-ounce cooked portion go to [Appendix 11](#) in the report.

Source: [Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010](#)

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