

# Is It Okay to Eat Fish?

## Benefits of Eating Fish

- Fish is an important part of a balanced diet.
- Fish and shellfish contain high quality protein and other essential nutrients.
- Fish is low in saturated fat, and contains omega-3 fatty acids.
- A well balanced diet that includes a variety of fish and shellfish can contribute to heart health.

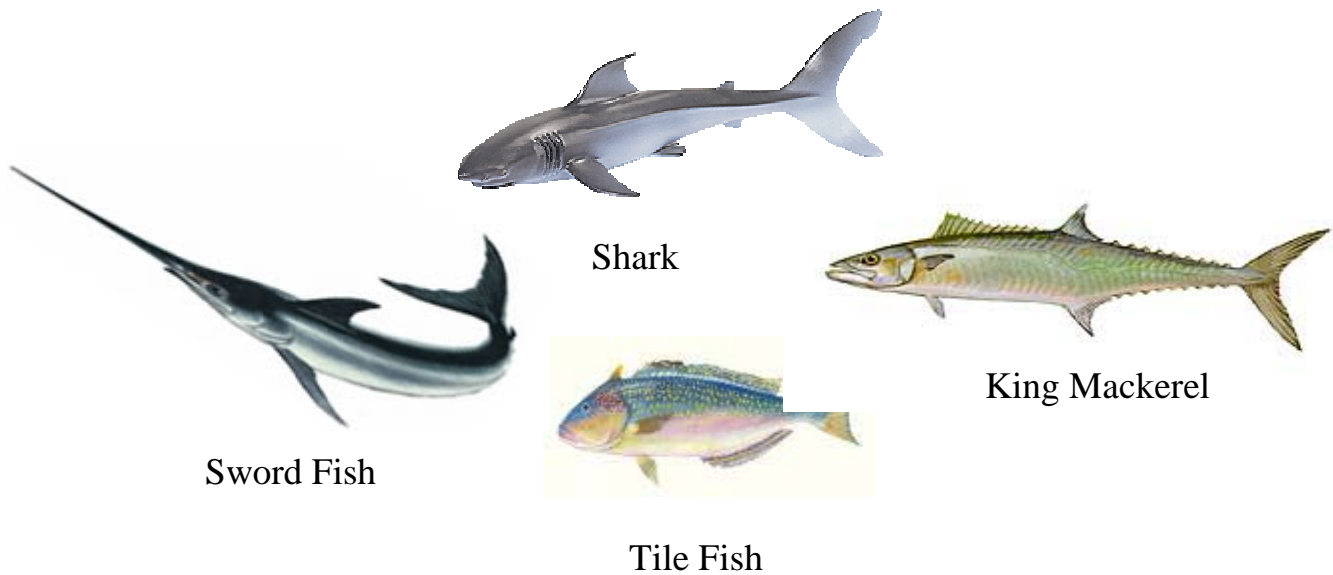
## Tips for Handling, Storing and Cooking Fish

- Purchase fish with a fresh mild odor/no fishy smell.
- Make sure skin is firm to the touch and “springs back” into place.
- Do not buy cooked seafood displayed with raw fish.
- Store fish in the coldest part of the refrigerator.
- Store uncooked fish below ready-to-eat foods.
- Thaw frozen fish in the refrigerator overnight.
- To reduce exposure to polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), fat should be trimmed before broiling, baking or grilling fish; all of these methods are preferred over frying because they enable the PCB content in the fat to cook off.
- Cook until completely white (or opaque) and flaky.
- Do not overcook.
  - Cooking fish at too high a temperature or for too long toughens it, dries it out and destroys the flavor.



## Three Safety Tips

1. Women who are pregnant or nursing, women who might become pregnant and young children are advised not to eat fish high in mercury. Others may want to limit consumption of these fish to once per week:

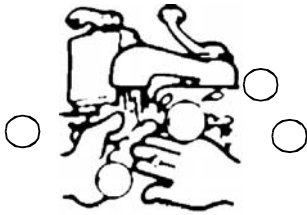


These contain high levels of mercury. Mercury builds up in the blood and may harm an unborn baby or a young child's developing nervous system.

2. Eat up to 12 ounces (2 average meals) a week of a variety of fish and shellfish that are lower in mercury.
  - Five of the most commonly eaten fish that are low in mercury are shrimp, canned light tuna, salmon, pollock, and catfish.
  - Another commonly eaten fish, albacore (white) tuna has more mercury than canned light tuna.
3. Check local advisories about the safety of fish caught by family and friends in your local lakes, rivers and coastal areas. If no advice is available, eat up to six ounces (one average meal) per week of fish you catch from local waters, but don't consume any other fish during that week.

# Important Food Safety Tips

## Clean



- Always wash hands with soap and warm running water for at least 20 seconds.
- Wash cutting boards, knives, utensils, and counter tops in hot, soapy water.

## Separate

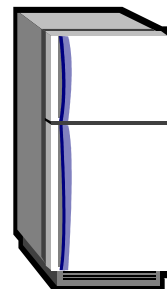
- Don't cross contaminate.
- Store raw meat, poultry and seafood away from other foods.
- Use separate cutting boards for raw meat and other foods.

## Cook

- Use a food thermometer to check temperatures.
- Foods should always be cooked to the recommended endpoint temperature for that particular food.
- Keep hot foods above 140°F and always reheat leftovers to 165°F.

## Chill

- Keep food at 40°F or colder in the refrigerator.
- Keep food at 0°F or colder in the freezer.
- Defrost food in the refrigerator, cold water, or microwave. Never on the counter.
- **When in doubt, throw it out!**



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