



## Delta Gamma Well Aware

Encompasses eight dimensions: Social, Spiritual, Physical, Emotional, Vocational, Intellectual, Financial and Leadership Development

## October is National Seafood Month

### Health Benefits

The proteins, vitamins, minerals and omega-3 fatty acids in seafood play the following important roles in human health:

#### Eyes

- Contributes to vision development and nerve growth in the retina
- May reduce symptoms of dry eye syndrome

#### Lungs

- May reduce symptoms of asthma and bronchitis
- May decrease risk for COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)

#### Muscles and Joints

- Helps to build muscles and tissues
- May help relieve symptoms and inflammation caused by rheumatoid arthritis

#### Brain

- May reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease
- May reduce the incidence of depression
- Aids in infant neurodevelopment and the building of brain tissue

#### Heart

- Reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease and stroke
- Decreases blood pressure (slightly) and the risk of heart arrhythmias
- Decreases blood triglyceride levels and increases HDL (good) cholesterol
- Improves circulation

**150 = average number of calories in most 3.5 ounce servings of seafood**

### Potential Dangers

## Mercury

- Nearly all fish contain some mercury, mostly from industrial pollution.
- Low levels of mercury may damage the developing nervous system in fetuses, infants and young children and high levels can cause neurological and vision problems, even death in children and adults.
- Only women who are or may become pregnant, nursing mothers and young children are advised to avoid shark, tilefish, swordfish and king mackerel because of their high mercury levels.
- These high-risk groups should also limit their intake of canned albacore (white) tuna and tuna steak to no more than six ounces a week and total fish intake to no more than 12 ounces a week from a variety of sources.

## PCBs and other Contaminants

- Fish may also contain PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) and other pollutants (such as DDT and dioxin).
- PCBs are banned industrial chemicals that accumulate in the body; they have been shown to cause cancer and other serious health problems in lab animals.
- PCBs are more likely to show up in fish from lakes and rivers, but can be found in the ocean as well.
- Studies have identified higher levels of PCBs in farmed salmon than in wild fish because farmed salmon get PCBs from their feed, while wild salmon have a more varied diet.
- There is no need to completely avoid farmed salmon when trying to avoid PCBs, just do not eat it every week.
- To determine if supermarket salmon is wild or farmed, check the label. A new law requires that supermarket fish be labeled with its country of origin and whether it was farmed or wild-caught.
  - Most salmon is farmed, including “Atlantic” salmon and most smoked salmon.
  - All Alaskan salmon is wild as is almost all canned salmon.
  - In restaurants it can be difficult to accurately determine if salmon is wild or farmed, but wild salmon typically costs much more than farmed salmon, so price is a good indicator.

**16.2 = pounds of fish eaten yearly per person in the United States**

## Safely Enjoy Seafood

- Eat fish in moderation (two to three times a week) and vary your choices.
- Fatty fish that are lower in the food chain, such as sardines, herring and anchovies provide a lot of omega-3s and are sound environmental choices.
- Get an idea of your average mercury exposure from seafood by visiting the following links:
  - <http://www.gotmercury.org/>
  - [www.cfsan.fda.gov/~frf/sea-mehg.html](http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~frf/sea-mehg.html)
  - [www.epa.gov/mercury/advisories.htm](http://www.epa.gov/mercury/advisories.htm)
  - [www.epa.gov/waterscience/fish/states.htm](http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/fish/states.htm)

- Choose wild salmon when it is available and if you can afford it. If you do eat farmed salmon, South American sources usually contain fewer PCBs.
- To reduce PCBs in fish, remove the skin and fat beneath it before cooking and broil, bake or grill the fish on a rack instead of sautéing or frying it. This allows the fat, where the chemicals concentrate, to drain off, but still leaves healthy omega-3s.

**81 = percentage of U.S. fisheries that are sustainably managed**

#### Seafood with a Conscience

- Many fish species are threatened because of poor management practices and overfishing; seafood sustainability is a complex issue.
- Use the following links to help you select sustainable seafood:
  - [www.oceansalive.org](http://www.oceansalive.org)
  - [www.msc.org](http://www.msc.org)
  - [www.aboutseafood.com](http://www.aboutseafood.com)
- [Click here](#) to download a helpful pocket seafood selector.

#### Wellness Resources

UC Berkeley Wellness Letter, January 2007

National Fisheries Institute, [www.aboutseafood.com](http://www.aboutseafood.com)

United States Environmental Protection Agency, [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

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*for hope. for strength. for life.*