

Eat Seafood: All the Reasons You Need



People feel good about seafood — they agree it's good for their health, it's a perfect choice when they want something special, or they love how it tastes. In fact, Americans are eating more seafood as they discover its great taste and healthy benefits. In 2017, a third of consumers reported they increased their fish consumption at home in the past year.

Despite this, few people are eating seafood on a regular basis — only one in 10 consumers meet the goal of having seafood two times per week.¹ To help consumers make the leap, give them these reasons:

1

LIVE (HEALTHIER) LONGER

- Fish literally saves lives. Eating seafood two to three times per week reduces the risk of death from any health-related cause by 17 percent.²
- Seven out of 10 deaths in the U.S. are preventable through nutrition and lifestyle changes, like adding omega-3s to your diet. Low seafood intake contributes to 55,000 deaths each year, making seafood deficiency a leading dietary contributor to preventable death in the U.S.³
- Older adults with highest fish consumption lived an average of 2.2 years longer.⁴

3

FISH IS BRAIN FOOD

- “As calcium is to the bones, DHA is to the brain,” says Dr. Tom Brenna, member of the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee. Seafood provides docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), a type of omega-3 essential for brain development and function, helping neurons trigger and cells regenerate. It is such an important building block that people with low levels of it have measurably smaller brains!⁶
- The FDA and EPA agree seafood consumption is especially important for pregnant or nursing women because eating fish regularly helps with the growth and development of children's brains and even helps boost IQ. Babies from moms who ate seafood twice a week had a higher IQ averaging 5.8 points.⁷
- People who regularly eat fish are 20 percent less likely than their peers to have depression.⁸ In fact, the American Psychiatric Association has endorsed the fatty acids in fish as an effective part of depression treatment.

2

SEAFOOD IS A “PROTEIN WITH BENEFITS”

- Seafood sits among the highest-quality proteins (like eggs, meats, poultry and dairy) and offers additional health benefits. It can reduce your risk of heart disease, improve how you feel during pregnancy and help your child develop a healthy brain and eyes, and improve memory and sharpness.^{2,5,6}
- As a “protein with benefits,” leading health organizations recommend Americans eat seafood at least twice a week.¹

4

SEAFOOD IS DELICIOUS, VERSATILE, BUDGET-FRIENDLY AND FAST

- From delicate, mild flounder to rich, flavorful salmon, or sweet and savory shrimp, seafood can please any palate.
- Seafood fits with all of your favorite flavors — it can be incorporated into a spicy Latin dish, flavorful Creole recipe, light and refreshing salad, or a rich Italian pasta bowl.
- Fresh, local, seasonal catches are easy on the wallet, as are frozen options and canned seafood, like tuna or salmon.
- From start to finish, fresh, frozen, or canned seafood can make a meal in 15 minutes or less.



¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2015 - 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. 8th Edition. December 2015. Available at <http://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/>.

² Mozaffarian D, Rimm EB. Fish intake, contaminants, and human health: evaluating the risks and the benefits. *JAMA*. 2006;296:1885-99.

³ Micha R, et al. Association Between Dietary Factors and Mortality From Heart Disease, Stroke, and Type 2 Diabetes in the United States. *JAMA*. 2017 Mar 7;317(9):912-924.

⁴ Mozaffarian D, et al. Plasma Phospholipid Long-Chain Omega-3 Fatty Acids and Total and Cause-Specific Mortality in Older Adults. *Ann Intern Med*. 2013 Apr 2;158(7):515-25.

⁵ Hibbeln JR, et al. Maternal seafood consumption in pregnancy and neurodevelopmental outcomes in childhood (ALSPAC study): an observational cohort study. *Lancet*. 2007;369(9561):578-85.

⁶ Tan MD, MPH, Z.S. Red blood cell omega-3 fatty acid levels and markers of accelerated brain aging. *Neurology*. 2012 Feb 28;78(9):658-664.

⁷ FAO/WHO (2011). Report of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultation on the Risks and Benefits of Fish Consumption. Rome, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; Geneva, World Health Organization, 50 pp.

⁸ Li F, et al. Fish consumption and risk of depression: a meta-analysis. *J Epidemiol Community Health*. 2016 Mar;70(3):299-304.