

Please note: The Nevada State Health Division (NSHD) follows the FDA's commercial fishing guidelines pertaining to mercury levels in fish. The action level by FDA is 1.0 parts per million. NSHD supports the joint FDA and EPA recommendations below:

What You Need to Know About Mercury in Fish and Shellfish

2004 EPA and FDA Advice For: Women Who Might Become Pregnant Women Who are Pregnant Nursing Mothers Young Children

Fish and shellfish are an important part of a healthy diet. Fish and shellfish contain high-quality protein and other essential nutrients, are low in saturated fat, and contain omega-3 fatty acids. A well-balanced diet that includes a variety of fish and shellfish can contribute to heart health and children's proper growth and development. In particular, women and young children should include fish or shellfish in their diets based on the many nutritional benefits.

Although nearly all fish and shellfish contain traces of mercury, for most people, the risk from mercury by eating fish and shellfish is not a health concern. However, some fish and shellfish contain higher levels of mercury that may harm an unborn baby or young child's developing nervous system. The risks from mercury in fish and shellfish depend largely on the amount of fish and shellfish eaten and the levels of mercury in the fish and shellfish. Therefore, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are advising women who may become pregnant, pregnant women, nursing mothers, and young children to avoid certain types of fish and to eat only fish and shellfish that are lower in mercury.

By following these guidelines for selecting and eating fish or shellfish, women and young children will receive the benefits of eating fish, while at the same time have confidence they have reduced their exposure to the harmful effects of mercury.

1. Do not eat Shark, Swordfish, King Mackerel, or Tilefish which contain high levels of mercury.
2. Eat up to 12 ounces (2 average size meals) a week of a variety of fish and shellfish that are lower in mercury
 - o Five of the most commonly eaten fish low in mercury are shrimp, canned light tuna, salmon, pollock, and catfish.
 - o Another commonly eaten fish, albacore "white" tuna has more mercury than canned light tuna. When choosing your two meals of fish and shellfish, you may safely eat up to 6 ounces (one average meal) of albacore tuna per week.
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 6 ounces (one average meal) per week of fish you catch from local waters, but do not consume any other fish during that week.

Helpful links:

Nevada State Health Division: Health Advisories

- [Big and Little Washoe lakes](#)
- [Carson River from Dayton to the Lahontan Dam](#)
- [Comins Lake](#)
- [Chimney Dam Reservoir](#)
- [Rye Patch Reservoir](#)

[Health Advisory Press Release](#)

Nevada Department of Wildlife: <http://ndow.org/fish/health/index.shtm>

Nevada Division of Environmental Protection: www.ndep.nv.gov

U.S. Food and Drug Administration: www.fda.gov

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: www.epa.gov