

# NUTRITION IN PREGNANCY

**Myth:** Eat up, you're eating for two.

**Fact:** A pregnant woman may be eating for two, but one of them only weighs a few pounds. Your body only needs about 300 **extra calories** when you are pregnant, which is about the amount in one (8oz) cooked chicken breast, without the skin.

## WEIGHT GAIN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PREGNANT WOMEN:

If before pregnancy, you were...	You should gain...
Underweight BMI less than 18.5	28-40 pounds
Normal Weight BMI 18.5-24.9	25-35 pounds
Overweight BMI 25.0-29.9	15-25 pounds
Obese BMI greater than or equal to 30.0	11- 20 pounds



WASHINGTON HEALTH SYSTEM  
Wilfred R. Cameron Wellness Center

PROVIDING THE  
**EXOS EXPERIENCE**

# Myth: You should can the fish.

**Fact:** The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) advise pregnant and breastfeeding women to eat up to 12 ounces of **low-mercury fish** a week. Fish contains DHA (docosahexanoic acid), an omega-3 polyunsaturated fat, that is essential for your baby's brain and eye development. Our bodies don't make it, so we need to get it from the food we eat. It's found mainly in fatty cold-water fish, like **salmon, herring, tuna, trout, and oysters, but now you can find DHA in everything from orange juice to yogurt.**

## Environmental contaminants:

Mercury is an environmental contaminant that is found in high concentrations in some foods and can impair fetal growth and the developing infant brain. Foods that contain high concentrations of mercury should be avoided (see picture below). **Fish oil supplements should be avoided.**

## Cooking Tips: Fish

Check the inside cooking temperature by placing the thermometer into the thickest part of the food. Here is a list of minimum cooking temperatures:

**Fin fish:** 145 degrees or until flesh is opaque and separates easily with a fork.

**Shrimp, lobster, and crabs:** cook until flesh is pearly white and opaque.

**Clams, oysters, and mussels:** cook until shells open during cooking. Discard any that do not open during cooking.

**Scallops:** cook until flesh is milky white, opaque, and firm.

### Advice About Eating Fish

#### What Pregnant Women & Parents Should Know

Fish and other protein-rich foods have nutrients that can help your child's growth and development.

For women of childbearing age (about 16-49 years old), especially pregnant and breastfeeding women, and for parents and caregivers of young children.

- Eat 2 to 3 servings of fish a week from the "Best Choices" list OR 1 serving from the "Good Choices" list.
- Eat a variety of fish.
- Serve 1 to 2 servings of fish a week to children, starting at age 2.
- If you eat fish caught by family or friends, check for fish advisories. If there is no advisory, eat only one serving and no other fish that week.\*

#### Use this chart!

You can use this chart to help you choose which fish to eat, and how often to eat them, based on their mercury levels. The "Best Choices" have the lowest levels of mercury.

#### What is a serving?



For an adult  
4 ounces



For children,  
ages 4 to 7  
2 ounces

To find out, use the palm of your hand!

Best Choices EAT 2 TO 3 SERVINGS A WEEK			OR	Good Choices EAT 1 SERVING A WEEK		
Anchovy	Herring	Scallop		Bluefish	Monkfish	Tilefish (Atlantic Ocean)
Atlantic croaker	Lobster, American and spiny	Shad		Buffalofish	Rockfish	Tuna, albacore/white tuna, canned and fresh/frozen
Atlantic mackerel	Mullet	Shrimp		Carp	Sablefish	Tuna, yellowfin
Black sea bass	Oyster	Skate		Chilean sea bass/Patagonian toothfish	Sheepshead	Weakfish/seatrout
Butterfish	Pacific chub mackerel	Smelt		Grouper	Snapper	White croaker/Pacific croaker
Catfish	Perch, freshwater and ocean	Sole		Halibut	Spanish mackerel	
Clam	Pickrel	Squid		Mahi mahi/dolphinfish	Striped bass (ocean)	
Cod	Plaice	Tilapia				
Crab	Pollock	Trout, freshwater				
Crawfish	Salmon	Tuna, canned light (includes skipjack)				
Flounder	Sardine	Whitfish				
Haddock		Whiting				
Hake						
<b>Choices to Avoid HIGHEST MERCURY LEVELS</b>						
King mackerel		Shark		Tilefish (Gulf of Mexico)		
Marlin		Swordfish		Tuna, bigeye		
Orange roughy						

\*Some fish caught by family and friends, such as larger carp, catfish, trout and perch, are more likely to have fish advisories due to mercury or other contaminants. State advisories will tell you how often you can safely eat those fish.