

Frequently Asked Questions

- Is fish ordered in restaurants safe to eat?
Fish served in restaurants (including fast food restaurants) are usually low mercury fish. There are exceptions; however, which include swordfish, shark, mackerel, and higher grades of tuna (including tuna found in sushi).
- I may want to have children in the future but not now. Am I still at risk?
Methylmercury can accumulate in the blood stream over a period of time. Though it is removed from the body naturally, it can take over a year for the levels to drop. If you are a woman who is trying to get pregnant, avoid eating certain types of fish, such as the fish referenced in the first question.
- What about farm raised fish?
Farm raised fish are fed a diet of man-made fish food which causes the mercury levels in those fish (i.e. catfish, tilapia, and salmon) to be very low.
- The DEQ advisories do not include the fish that I consume. Where do I find the advisory information?
Begin by visiting the EPA Fish Advisory Website (<http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/fish/>). If you still cannot find the fish, please call DEQ.
- What do I do if DEQ has not sampled my lake?
Follow the general advice listed in the Mercury in Fish Advisory Booklet. Also, continue to visit the DEQ Fish Consumption Website as DEQ intends to study more lakes and will post updated information as it becomes available.
- What if I eat more than the recommend serving in one week?
If you eat more than the recommended serving of fish in a week, adjust the average serving with the following week.

Example: You are allowed 2 servings (12 oz. total) of fish per week. Instead, you had three servings (18 oz. total) during the week. The following week you should only have one serving (6 oz. total).

- Why do some fish accumulate more mercury than other fish?
Mercury can accumulate in sediments where small organisms feed. The mercury is then passed up through the food chain where it concentrates in predator fish. Even though they are fun to catch, it is typically a good idea to avoid eating larger, older fish.
- What do I do with the fish I already have in the freezer?
It is recommended that you follow the general fish consumption advice outlined in the Mercury in Fish Advisory Booklet.
Mercury in Fish Advisory booklet
- What if I have been eating fish forever?
If you have been eating fish for a long period of time, begin to alter your diet to the recommended servings and avoid fish that are higher in mercury. If you have any major concerns about your mercury levels, please contact your doctor.
- Is it safe to drink the water from lakes with mercury advisories? Can I swim and boat in those lakes?
The treated drinking water from the lakes with mercury advisories is safe for consumption as well as recreation. The amount of mercury in the water is extraordinarily low, approximately 1000 times lower than the Safe Drinking Water Standards.
- If I have more questions, who do I contact?
Pam Baldwin at (405) 702 – 1022 or Jay Wright at (405) 702 – 1017.