

NUTRITION BITES

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CARE MANAGEMENT

Don't Let the "Big One" Get Away ... Fish

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Fishing is a favorite summer pastime, enjoyed by both the young and old. In the morning or evening, on the shore or in a boat, there is nothing more exciting than reeling in your first fish or the pride of catching the biggest one on a fishing trip. Fish

are one of the few high-protein foods where you can participate in catching, cleaning, cooking and eating. Though you may not quite be ready to bait that hook just yet, there are plenty of reasons to increase your fish consumption. The 2020 - 2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend consuming four ounces of fish twice a week, so it's time to add fish to your grocery list.

Sea-Worthy Nutrition Fish Facts

Fish is considered a high-protein food like beef, pork and poultry. However, unlike the others, all fish are considered low in calories, including those that are "fatty fish." Fish provide one to three grams of fat per ounce, which equates to about 45 calories per ounce. Often, the oil or breading used in the preparation of fish adds the bulk of the calories to your entrée. A healthy preparation method (baking, grilling, broiling and sautéing) can reel in a delicious, low-calorie, high-protein and nutrient-dense dish. Other key nutrients found in fish include vitamins D and B2 (riboflavin), calcium, phosphorus, iron, zinc, iodine, magnesium, potassium and selenium.


The Catch With Fish and Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Did you know that your body participates in making various fatty acids from the foods you eat? These fatty acids are called non-essential fatty acids because your body can make them. This is not the case for omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3s are essential fats, meaning your body cannot make them, and you must get these key nutrients from the foods you eat.

The excitement over omega-3 fatty acids began in the early 1980s when a segment of people from Greenland whose diets consisted of various meats, including high amounts of cold-water fish, reported lower rates of heart disease. As more studies were conducted, omega-3s earned the label "the good fats," unlike saturated fats ("the bad fats") found in other animal foods. The two essential omega-3 fatty acids are EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) and DHA (docosahexaenoic acid). It's important to know that not all fish are alike when it comes to their omega-3 count. Fish with higher amounts are herring, salmon, bluefin tuna, sardines and trout.

Omega-3s deliver immense health benefits for your heart, brain, lungs, eyes and circulation. Studies have reported adequate intake of DHA is essential for good brain health, cognitive development in babies and may improve memory in adults. These fatty acids are important for eye function in protecting against dry eye disease and promote normal functioning of the nervous system. Omega-3s have anti-inflammatory effects that treat conditions like





obesity, asthma, arthritis and even cancer. And based on newer research, they may even help manage psychological and behavioral conditions.

Mercury and Eating Raw Fish

The fact is, nearly all fish contain traces of mercury. For most people the risk of eating fish is not a health concern. Fortunately, nine of the 11 most popular fish eaten in America are low in mercury and can be enjoyed without health risks.

Because mercury is toxic to nerve cells and can cause vision, coordination and learning impairments, pregnant women and parents of small children are encouraged to choose low mercury-containing fish like salmon or tilapia. Fish with high levels of mercury, like swordfish and orange roughy, should be eaten sparingly. For a complete list, visit the Food & Drug Administration or Environmental Protection Agency websites.

Raw and undercooked fish are popular food choices in restaurants and grocery stores in the United States and abroad. For healthy adults wanting to consume these foods, it is advisable to make sure the restaurants and stores are using fresh, high-quality ingredients and following proper food safety practices. If you're cooking fish, follow safe food handling practices and cook all fish until it reaches 145 degrees or until the flesh is opaque and easily separated with a fork to reduce your risk of any foodborne illness.

Raw and undercooked fish are not safe for everyone to eat. For example, individuals with compromised immune systems such as cancer patients on treatment, pregnant women, children younger than five and adults older than 65 should not consume raw fish of any kind.

Now that you are more informed, pack up that tackle box and head out to catch your dinner.

For more information on fish safety:

<https://www.fda.gov/food/consumers/advice-about-eating-fish>

<https://mercuryfactsandfish.org/mercury-facts/the-safe-or-reference-dose/>



Featured Recipe

Simple Grilled Salmon & Vegetables

For complete recipe and nutrition facts: [Eating Well](#)

Preparation time: 25 minutes

Servings: 4



INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium zucchini, halved lengthwise
- 2 red, orange and/or yellow bell peppers, trimmed, halved and seeded
- 1 medium red onion, cut into 1-inch wedges
- 1 **tablespoon** extra-virgin oil
- ½ **teaspoon** salt, divided
- ½ **teaspoon** ground pepper
- 1 ¼ **pounds** salmon fillet, cut into 4 portions
- ¼ **cup** thinly sliced fresh basil
- 1 lemon, cut into 4 wedges

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Preheat** grill to medium heat.
2. **Brush** zucchini, peppers and onion with oil and **sprinkle** with ¼ **teaspoon** salt. **Sprinkle** salmon with pepper and remaining ¼ **teaspoon** salt.
3. **Place** the vegetables and the salmon pieces, skin-side down, on the grill.
4. **Cook** the vegetables, **turning** them once or twice, until they are tender and grill marks appear (about **four to six minutes** per side).
5. **Cook** the salmon, without turning, until it flakes when tested with a fork (about **eight to 10 minutes**).
6. When cool enough to handle, roughly **chop** the vegetables and **toss** together in a large bowl. **Remove** the skin from the salmon fillets (if desired) and serve alongside the vegetables. **Garnish** each serving with **one tablespoon** basil and **serve** with a lemon wedge.

Serving Size (1 ¼ cups vegetables and 1 piece salmon):

281 calories; protein 30.2g; carbohydrates 10.6g; dietary fiber 3.1g; sugars 5.9g; fat 12.7g; saturated fat 2.3g; cholesterol 66.3mg; sodium 369.3mg.

