

Eat Fish Often?

A Minnesota Guide to Eating Fish

Fish Consumption Guidance

Fish are an important part of a nutritious, well-balanced diet and part of many Minnesotan traditions and cultures, but any fish (store-bought or locally-caught) could have contaminants that can harm human health – especially children and fetuses.



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Statewide Fish Consumption Guidelines



= People who are or may become pregnant, people who are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed, and children under age 15



= Men and boys age 15 or over, and people not planning to become pregnant

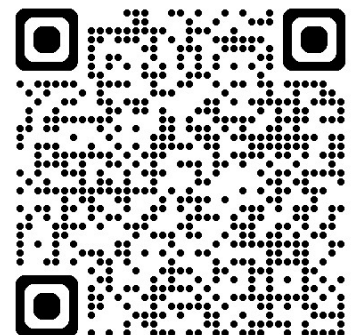
Species	4 servings per week	1 serving per week	1 serving per month	Do not eat
Bass		Men and boys	People who are or may become pregnant, people who are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed, and children under age 15	
Bullhead	Men and boys	People who are or may become pregnant, people who are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed, and children under age 15		
Catfish		Men and boys	People who are or may become pregnant, people who are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed, and children under age 15	
Cisco (Lake Herring)	Men and boys	People who are or may become pregnant, people who are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed, and children under age 15		
Crappie	Men and boys	People who are or may become pregnant, people who are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed, and children under age 15		
Inland Stream Trout (Brook, Brown, Rainbow)	Men and boys	People who are or may become pregnant, people who are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed, and children under age 15		
Lake Trout		Men and boys	People who are or may become pregnant, people who are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed, and children under age 15	
Lake Whitefish	Men and boys	People who are or may become pregnant, people who are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed, and children under age 15		
Muskellunge			Men and boys	People who are or may become pregnant, people who are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed, and children under age 15
Northern Pike		Men and boys	People who are or may become pregnant, people who are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed, and children under age 15	
Sunfish	Men and boys	People who are or may become pregnant, people who are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed, and children under age 15		
Walleye		Men and boys	People who are or may become pregnant, people who are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed, and children under age 15	
Yellow Perch	Men and boys	People who are or may become pregnant, people who are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed, and children under age 15		
Other Species Not Listed		Men and boys	People who are or may become pregnant, people who are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed, and children under age 15	

Follow these guidelines to lower your exposure to contaminants in fish:

Check the Waterbody-Specific Fish Consumption Guidelines to see if there are more restrictive guidelines for fish species caught in Minnesota lakes and rivers or Lake Superior.

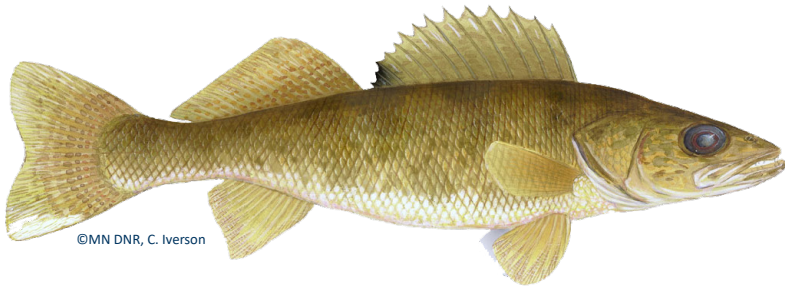
Check the Statewide Fish Consumption Guidelines for general guidelines for fish from Minnesota waters or the store/restaurant.

Visit: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/fish/guidelines.html>



How clean a lake looks is not a sign of how safe the fish are to eat.

The most studied contaminants in Minnesota fish include mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).



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Mercury is found in most fish - locally-caught and store-bought. Fish from lakes in northeastern Minnesota generally have more mercury than in southern and central Minnesota. How much mercury is in fish depends on:

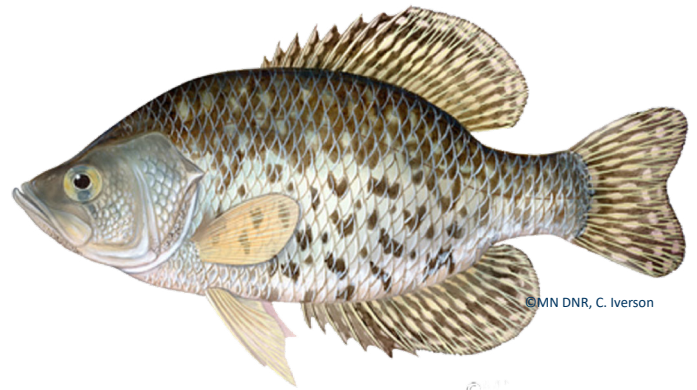
- Species. Some fish have more mercury than others because of what they eat and how long they live - Bass, Northern and Walleye have higher levels than Panfish.
- Size. Smaller fish generally have less mercury than larger, older fish of the same species. Unlike people, fish do not get rid of mercury.

PFAS is found at low levels in most fish tested. Higher levels have been found in fish from some waters in the Twin Cities Metro and Duluth areas.

Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) are highest in fatty fish such as Carp, Catfish, and Lake Trout from major rivers and Lake Superior.

Fish consumption guidance depends on:

- Where you caught the fish. Some waterbodies have Waterbody-Specific Guidelines due to elevated levels of PFAS, mercury, or PCBs.
- Who you are. Some people are more sensitive than others to negative health effects from exposure to contaminants in fish. The most sensitive groups include people who are or may become pregnant, those who are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed, and children under age 15.
- Species of fish. The maximum number of servings recommended per week or month may vary among fish species caught in the same waterbody.



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More Resources

Fish Consumption Guidance

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/fish>

LakeFinder

<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lakefind/index.html>