

Which Fish has the most EPA/DHA?

Fish is the ideal food to eat when trying to improve your diet. It is a rich source of high quality protein, vitamins, minerals, and, most importantly, the omega-3 fatty acids EPA and DHA. The benefits of eating fish are connected to their content of these important fatty acids. Since the 1980s it has been well documented that consumption of fish is correlated with a lower risk of cardiovascular disease. More recently, research has demonstrated that the risk of certain cancers (breast, prostate, colon, and lung) and other chronic diseases such as diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, and depression, is lower with regular fish consumption.

There are important safety issues to consider regarding fish consumption. The most common warning concerns mercury content, highest in certain tunas, swordfish, and shark. Mercury is toxic as it accumulates in our bodies, particularly in pregnant women and young children. FDA recommendations suggest that pregnant women or those who may become pregnant eat fresh tuna, swordfish, or shark no more than once per month. Fish considered safe for pregnant women include: wild pacific salmon, farm-raised catfish and trout, flounder, and haddock. Freshwater fish, in general, should be limited as they are more likely to be contaminated with pesticides and potential carcinogens. Small, deepwater fish are the best choice, with Alaskan salmon playing a starring role concerning both safety and omega-3 content.

Fish contains variable amounts of the protective omega-3 fatty acids EPA and DHA. Fish that contain the highest amount of omega-3 fatty acids include: salmon, blue fin tuna, herring, mackerel, and whitefish. Some fish that are high in omega-3 fatty acids, such as certain types of tuna, are not always the best choices due to their mercury content.

The best choices are those that are abundant, not endangered, and are caught or farmed in environmentally friendly ways. Common choices in this category include: wild Alaskan salmon, Pacific cod, black cod, sardines, halibut, rainbow trout, tilapia, catfish, albacore and skipjack tuna, and striped bass, either farmed or wild.

The list below will give you some idea of which common fish or seafoods are the richest sources of EPA and DHA. The best and safest choices are in bold print.

Helpful websites include: <http://www.montereybayaquarium.org> and ewg.org

FISH**mg (EPA+DHA)/100g in 3 ½ oz, cooked**

Anchovy	2055
Herring, Atlantic and Pacific	2014-2125
Pacific mackerel	1848
Salmon, sockeye, smoked, canned	1570
Tuna, blue fin	1477
Salmon, Wild Coho	1374
Salmon, canned, red, Alaskan	1080
Sardines	984
Rainbow trout	988
Striped bass	967
Flounder	500
Halibut	463
Tuna, canned light (safer than white)	270
Tuna, skipjack	228
Pacific Cod	215

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