

News



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Connecticut Department of Public Health

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DPH Releases Updated Guide on Safely Eating Fish Caught in Connecticut

Guide includes advice on consuming sushi

Hartford – With the start of the fishing season upon us, the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) has issued an updated version of its guide for eating fish caught in Connecticut waterways. The guide, *If I Catch It, Can I Eat It? A Guide to Safe Eating of Fish Caught in Connecticut*, provides new advice on consuming sushi.

“This guide gives important advice on how to safely eat fish caught in Connecticut,” stated DPH Commissioner Dr. Jewell Mullen. “Fish are a good source of protein and omega-3 fatty acids, a nutrient thought to prevent heart disease and, in pregnant women, beneficial to the developing fetus. While we recommend that the public eat fish, certain guidelines should be followed in order to eat fish safely.”

The standard advice for pregnant women and children, who are considered to be high risk groups in regard to the consumption of fish, is to eat no more than one meal *per month* of freshwater fish caught in Connecticut. People in other groups should eat no more than one meal *per week* of freshwater fish caught in the state.

This standard advice is due to mercury contamination found in Connecticut freshwater fish. The advice also recommends limiting or avoiding striped bass and bluefish caught in Long Island Sound due to Polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) contamination. Mercury and PCBs are environmental pollutants that can cause adverse health effects, especially in the developing fetus.

The guide also includes a listing of other water bodies and species of fish in Connecticut with specific consumption recommendations.

Sushi

DPH recently developed consumption advice on some fish species served in sushi. Certain types of fish found in sushi, including swordfish and Bluefin tuna, can be high in mercury. Due to the high levels of mercury, pregnant and breastfeeding women and young children should avoid Kajiki, which contains swordfish. They should also limit sushi products containing tuna, including Ahi, Magoro, and Toro, to one meal per month.

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Some sushi ingredients, such as salmon, are low in mercury, and may be eaten more frequently. Everyone else should limit consumption of swordfish to once per month and to tuna twice per week.

The advice for pregnant women is specific to the mercury in sushi and is separate from concerns regarding bacterial contamination of raw fish during pregnancy. Consumption of raw or undercooked seafood may increase the risk for foodborne illness, especially for young children, elderly adults, pregnant women, and persons with certain medical conditions.

The updated guide, also available in Spanish, can be found on the DPH website at www.ct.gov/dph/fish and at most tackle shops and town clerks offices. For more information, or to obtain a copy of the update, please contact Sharee Rusnak at (860) 509-7740 or sharee.rusnak@ct.gov.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health is the state's leader in public health policy and advocacy with a mission to protect and promote the health and safety of the people of our state. To contact the department, please visit its website at www.ct.gov/dph or call (860) 509-7270.

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