CONSUMPTION ADVICE REGARDING MERCURY FISH

FROM THE SPANISH AGENCY FOR FOOD **SAFETY AND NUTRITION (AESAN)**



POPULATION AT RISK

GENERAL POPULATION



WOMEN WHO ARE **PREGNANT**, who may **BECOME PREGNANT OR WHO**

ARE BREASTFEEDING. **CHILDREN 0-10 YEARS** OLD.



CHILDREN BETWEEN 10 - 14 YEARS

SPECIES WITH HIGH LEVELS OF MERCURY

SPECIES WITH LOW TO **MEDIUM LEVELS**

SPECIES WITH

HIGH LEVELS OF

MERCURY

SPECIES WITH LOW TO MEDIUM

LEVELS

AVOID CONSUMPTION **3-4 SERVING OF FISH PER WEEK**

> Try to vary between white fish and oily fish

LIMIT CONSUMPTION TO 120 grams PER MONTH

3-4 SERVING OF FISH PER WEEK

Try to vary between white fish and oily fish

ALL SPECIES 3 - 4 SERVING OF FISH **PER WEEK** Try to vary between white fish and oily fish.

SPECIES



SPECIES WITH HIGH MERCURY LEVELS: Swordfish, Bluefin Tuna, (Thunnus thynnus), Shark (dogfish, porbeagle, spiny dogfish, spotted dogfish and blue shark), and Pike.

SPECIES WITH LOW MERCURY LEVELS: Anchovy, Atlantic cod, Atlantic herring, Atlantic mackerel, Atlantic salmon, Blue jack mackerel, Blue mussel, Blue whiting, Clam, Common carp, Common dab, Common octopus, Common prawn, Common prawn, Common sole, Common spiny lobster, Common squids, Cuttlefish, Donax clams, European seabass, Fringe-scale sardinella, Giant cupped oyster, Gilthead seabream, Great tit, Hake, Hen fish, Lemon sole, Marine crab, Murex, Norway lobster, Pacific salmon, Painted river prawn, Penaeus shrimps, Plaice Pollack, Ray's bream, Razor shell, Sardine, Sardinops, Sea trout, Short anchovy, Shrimp, Sprat, Squid, Stoker, Striped venus and Whiting. Other fishery products not specifically mentioned shall be understood to have MEDIUM LEVELS of mercury.

Mercury is an environmental pollutant that is found in our foods due to its natural presence in the Earth's crust and as a result of human activity. It is mainly present in fish in the form methylmercury.

Starting with its release into the environment, mercury is present in sea and rivers water and may be concentrated, in varying proportions, in fish. The amount of mercury in fish is related to its position in the food chain. This means that large, long-lived predatory fish, such as swordfish, shark, red tuna and pike have higher mercury levels. This is known as bioaccumulation.

Mercury may affect the developing central **nervous system** by direct exposure after consuming certain foods, or indirectly as it can cross the placenta. It may also be present in breast milk.

Therefore, women who are pregnant or who may become pregnant, those who are breastfeeding and young children are the most vulnerable population to mercury.

Yes. Eating fish is safe and healthy.

In European food legislation, there are mandatory maximum mercury limits controlled by health authorities that guarantee the safe consumption of foods by the population. Furthermore, fish consumption comes with health benefits given that it provides energy, is a source of proteins of high **biological value** and contributes to the intake of essential nutrients such as iodine, selenium, calcium, and vitamins A and D. It also has a good lipid profile, providing long chain omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids, a component of the dietary patterns associated with good health, and few saturated fatty acids.

Food Safety European Authority The (EFSA) has associated normal fish consumption during with pregnancy beneficial effects on neurodevelopment in children and with a reduced risk of mortality from coronary heart disease in adults.



MINISTERIO DE SANIDAD, CONSUMO Y BIENESTAR SOCIAL

ESPAÑA

