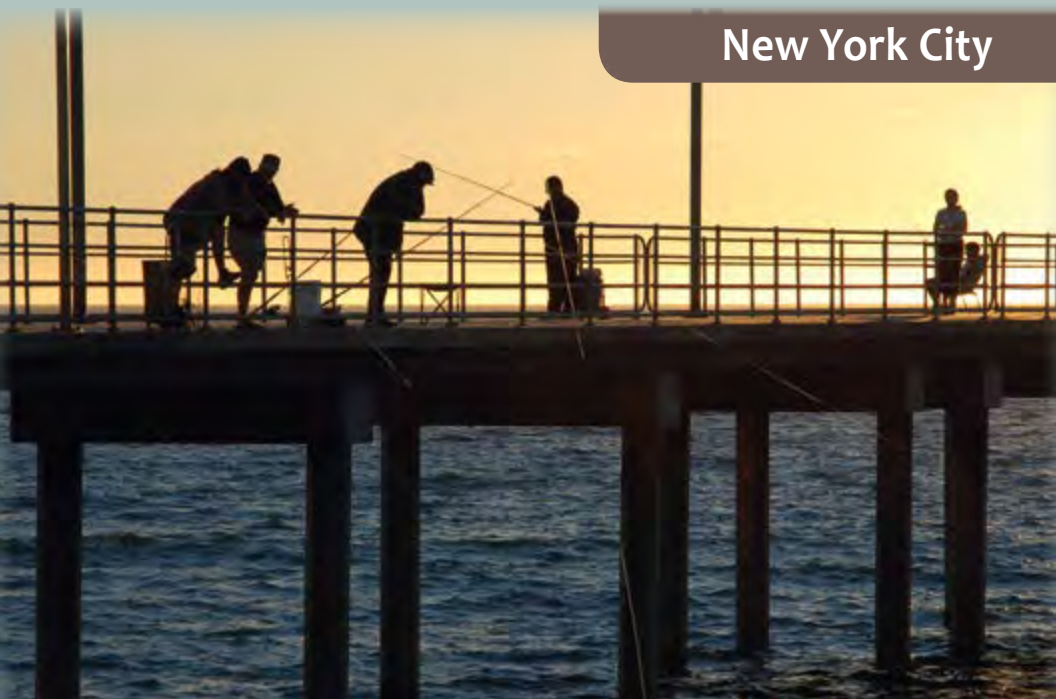
Catch the Latest Advice
health.ny.gov/fish

MAPS INSIDE

Long Island

Health Advice on Eating Fish You Catch

New York City



Why We Have Advisories

Fishing is fun and fish are an important part of a healthy diet. Fish contain high quality protein, essential nutrients, healthy fish oils and are low in saturated fat. However, some fish contain chemicals at levels that may be harmful to health. To help people make healthier choices about which fish they eat, the New York State Department of Health issues advice about eating sportfish (fish you catch). The health advice about which fish to eat depends on:

Where You Fish (see maps inside)

Fish from waters that are close to human activities and contamination sources are more likely to be contaminated than fish from remote marine waters. **In the New York City/Long Island (NYC/LI) area, fish from the Long Island Sound or the ocean are less contaminated.**

Who You Are

Women of childbearing age (under 50) and children under 15 are advised to limit the kinds of fish they eat and how often they eat them. Women who eat highly contaminated fish and become pregnant may have an increased risk of having children who are slower to develop and learn. Chemicals may have a greater effect on the development of young children or unborn babies. Also, some chemicals may be passed on in mother's milk.

Women beyond their childbearing years and men may face fewer health risks from some chemicals. For that reason, the advice for women over age 50 and men over age 15 allows them to eat more kinds of sportfish and more often (see tables, pages 4-10).

What You Catch

There is specific advice about limiting or not eating certain kinds of fish in the NYC/LI area (see tables, pages 4-10). Some species (kinds of fish) have higher levels of chemicals than others. In general, smaller fish are less contaminated than larger, older fish of the same species.

Health Risks

The primary chemicals of concern in New York City waters and Long Island marine waters are PCBs, dioxin and cadmium. In Long Island freshwaters the primary chemical is chlordane. These chemicals build up in your body over time. Health problems that may result from chemicals in fish range from small changes in health that are hard to detect to birth defects and cancer. (www.health.ny.gov/fish for more info.)

Tips for Healthier Eating

- PCBs, dioxin and chlordane are found at higher levels in the fat of fish. Reduce fat by properly trimming, skinning and cooking your catch:

- Cooking or soaking fish cannot eliminate the chemicals, but heat from cooking melts some of the fat. Broil, grill or bake the trimmed, skinned fish on a rack so that the fat drips away. Do not use drippings in sauces or gravies.
- Do not eat the soft "green stuff" (tomalley, mustard, liver or hepatopancreas) found in the body section of crabs and lobsters, and discard cooking liquid. Tomalley can contain high levels of chemicals, including PCBs, dioxin and cadmium.
- Bacteria, viruses or parasites can be in or on fish. Keep harvested fish cold. Wear gloves when skinning and trimming. Wash hands and surfaces often when preparing fish, and keep raw foods separate. Cook fish and shellfish thoroughly before eating.
- Try to space out your fish meals. For example, if the advice is that you can eat up to four meals a month, don't eat them all in the same week. This is particularly important for women and young children.

NYC UPPER Bay, Rivers and Kills

Waterbody	Fish	Men Over 15 & Women Over 50	Women Under 50 & Children Under 15
Arthur Kill Bronx River East River Gowanus Canal Harlem River Hudson River south of Tappan Zee Bridge Kill Van Kull Newark Bay Newtown Creek Raritan Bay west of Wolfe's Pond Park Upper New York Bay	American eel	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT
	Atlantic needlefish	Up to 1 meal/month	DON'T EAT
	Blue crabs	Up to 6 crabs/week DON'T EAT tomalley	DON'T EAT
	Bluefish	Up to 1 meal/month	DON'T EAT
	Carp	Up to 1 meal/month	DON'T EAT
	Channel catfish	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT
	Gizzard shad	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT
	Goldfish	Up to 1 meal/month	DON'T EAT
	Rainbow smelt	Up to 1 meal/month	DON'T EAT
	Striped bass	DON'T EAT: *Newark Bay, Arthur Kill, Kill Van Kull* Up to 1 meal/month: *from other waters listed to the left*	DON'T EAT
	White catfish	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT
	White perch	DON'T EAT: *Newark Bay, Arthur Kill, Kill Van Kull, Upper New York Bay, Western Raritan Bay* Up to 1 meal/month: *from other waters listed to the left*	DON'T EAT
	Crab or lobster tomalley	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT
	Other fish not listed	Up to 4 meals/month	DON'T EAT

Check the DEC website for updated regulations and special restrictions for certain species: www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/fishing.html.

American eel

Atlantic needlefish

Blue crab

Bluefish

Carp

Channel catfish

Gizzard shad

Goldfish

Rainbow smelt

Striped bass

White catfish

White perch

What about tributaries and connected waters?

The health advice also applies to tributaries and connected waters if there are no dams, falls or barriers to stop the fish from moving upstream. This is because chemicals remain in fish when they move from one waterbody to another. If you are not sure about possible fish barriers near waters where you are fishing, call your DEC office listed on the back of this booklet.

NYC LOWER Bay, Ocean and Sound

Waterbody	Fish	Men Over 15 & Women Over 50	Women Under 50 & Children Under 15
Atlantic Ocean Jamaica Bay (excluding Paerdegat Basin) Long Island Sound Lower New York Bay Raritan Bay east of Wolfe's Pond Park	American eel	Up to 4 meals/month	Up to 1 meal/month
	Bluefish	Up to 4 meals/month	Greater than 20", up to 1 meal/month; Less than 20", up to 4 meals/month
	Striped bass	Up to 4 meals/month	Up to 1 meal/month
	Weakfish	Greater than 25", up to 1 meal/month; Less than 25", up to 4 meals/month	Greater than 25", DON'T EAT; Less than 25", up to 1 meal/month
	Crab or lobster tomalley	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT
	Other fish not listed	New York State does not have advice for many fish in these waters because marine fish are generally less contaminated.	
Jamaica Bay* (Paerdegat Basin and 200 yards from its mouth)	All fish, All crabs	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT

* The advice for Paerdegat Basin was issued in response to a spill that led to discharges of PCB containing material in the Basin. An environmental investigation is underway to determine if there is residual contamination in the Basin. Please check www.health.ny.gov/fish to see whether this advice is still in effect.

Check the DEC website for regulations and special restrictions for certain species: www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/fishing.html.

The public is also reminded that all New York City waters are closed to shellfishing (harvest of clams, mussels, oysters or scallops). For information about shellfishing in Long Island waters, visit www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/345.html.

Visit www.health.ny.gov/fish for the latest fish advisory information.

Common Fish in NYS Marine Waters

American eel

Black sea bass

Bluefish

Dogfish

Porgy

Sea robin

Striped bass

Summer flounder

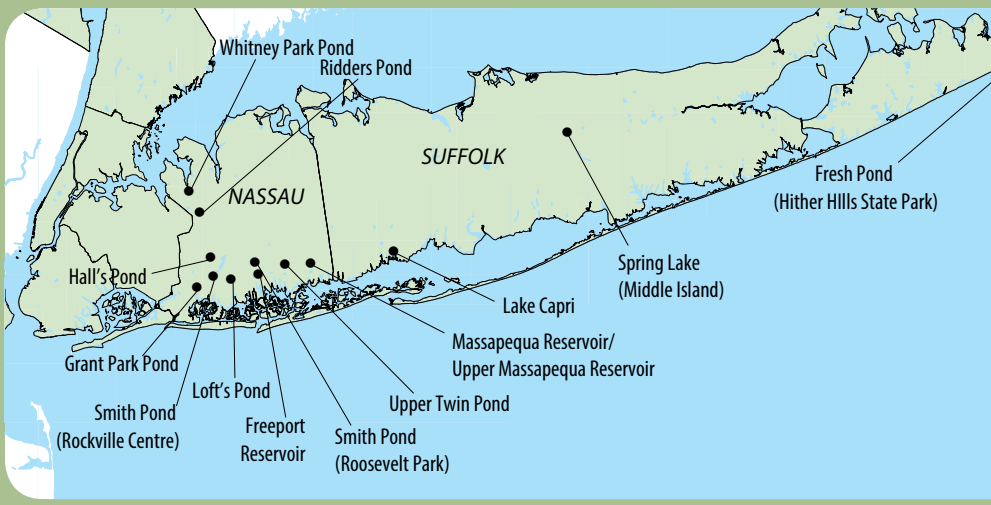
Tautog

Weakfish

Winter flounder

Long Island Fresh Waters

Waterbody	Fish	Men Over 15 & Women Over 50	Women Under 50 & Children Under 15
All freshwaters NOT listed below	All fish	Up to 4 meal/month	Up to 4 meal/month
Freeport Reservoir	Carp	Up to 1 meal/month	DON'T EAT
	All other fish	Up to 4 meal/month	DON'T EAT
Fresh Ponds, Hither Hills State Park	Largemouth bass	Greater than 15", up to 1 meal/ month; Less than 15", up to 4 meals/month	DON'T EAT
	All other fish	Up to 4 meal/month	DON'T EAT
Grant Park Pond	Carp	Up to 1 meal/month	DON'T EAT
	All other fish	Up to 4 meal/month	DON'T EAT
Hall's Pond	Carp, Goldfish	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT
	All other fish	Up to 4 meal/month	DON'T EAT
Lake Capri	American eel, Carp	Up to 1 meal/month	DON'T EAT
	All other fish	Up to 4 meal/month	DON'T EAT
Lofts Pond	Carp, Goldfish	Up to 1 meal/month	DON'T EAT
	All other fish	Up to 4 meal/month	DON'T EAT



Long Island Fresh Waters Continued	Fish	Men Over 15 & Women Over 50	Women Under 50 & Children Under 15
Massapequa Reservoir, upstream of Long Island Railroad	Carp, White perch	Up to 1 meal/month	DON'T EAT
	All other fish	Up to 4 meal/month	DON'T EAT
Ridders Pond	Goldfish	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT
	All other fish	Up to 4 meal/month	DON'T EAT
Smith Pond, Rockville Centre	White perch	Up to 1 meal/month	DON'T EAT
	All other fish	Up to 4 meal/month	DON'T EAT
Smith Pond, Roosevelt Park	Carp, Goldfish	Up to 1 meal/month	DON'T EAT
	American eel	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT
	All other fish	Up to 4 meal/month	DON'T EAT
Spring Lake, Middle Island	Carp, Goldfish	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT
	All other fish	Up to 4 meal/month	DON'T EAT
Upper Twin Pond	American eel, Carp	Up to 1 meal/month	DON'T EAT
	All other fish	Up to 4 meal/month	DON'T EAT
Whitney Park Pond	Carp, Goldfish	Up to 1 meal/month	DON'T EAT
	All other fish	Up to 4 meal/month	DON'T EAT

American eel *Carp* *Goldfish* *Largemouth bass* *White perch*

What about tributaries and connected waters?

The health advice also applies to tributaries and connected waters if there are no dams, falls or barriers to stop the fish from moving upstream. This is because chemicals remain in fish when they move from one waterbody to another. If you are not sure about possible fish barriers near waters where you are fishing, call your DEC office listed on the back of this booklet.

Long Island Marine Waters

Waterbody	Fish	Men Over 15 & Women Over 50	Women Under 50 & Children Under 15
Atlantic Ocean Block Island Sound Gardiners Bay Jamaica Bay (excluding Paerdegat Basin) Long Island Sound Long Island South Shore Peconic Bay	American eel	Up to 4 meals/month	Up to 1 meal/month
	Bluefish	Up to 4 meals/month	Greater than 20", up to 1 meal/month; Less than 20", up to 4 meals/month
	Striped bass	Up to 4 meals/month	Up to 1 meal/month
	Weakfish	Greater than 25", up to 1 meal/month; Less than 25" up to 4 meals/month	Greater than 25", DON'T EAT; Less than 25", up to 1 meal/month
	Crab or lobster tomalley	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT
	Other fish not listed	New York State does not have advice for many fish in these waters because marine fish are generally less contaminated.	
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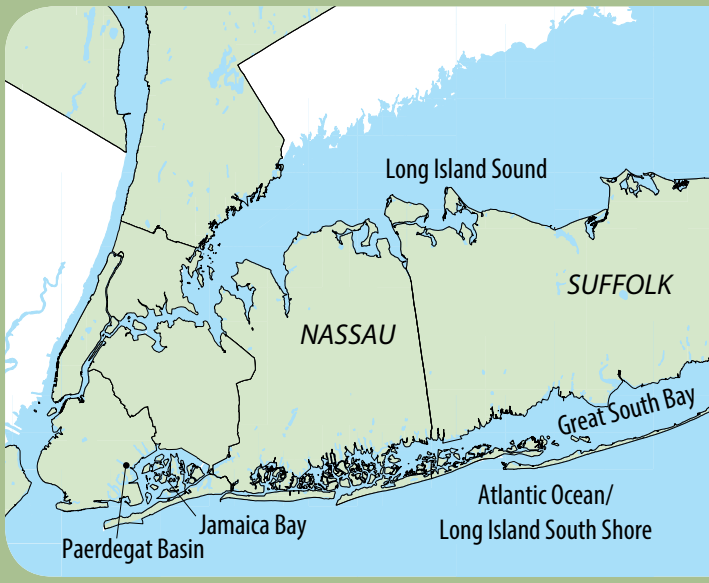

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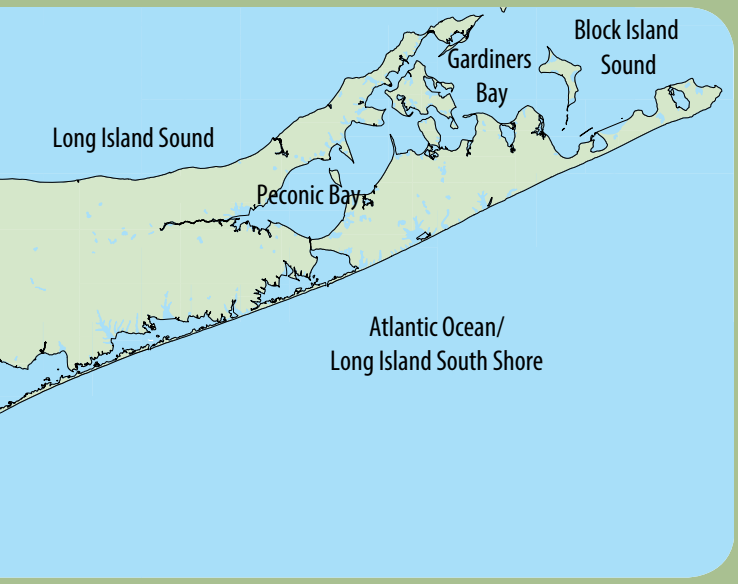

Fish from Stores and Restaurants

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulates the sale of commercial fish in markets. Due to concerns about mercury, FDA advises pregnant women, women who may become pregnant, nursing mothers and young children to avoid shark, swordfish, king mackerel and tilefish.

Food and Drug Administration: (888) SAFEFOOD, (888) 723-3366

More Information

New York State Fish Advisories

Department of Health
www.health.ny.gov/fish
(518) 402-7800
(800) 458-1158
email BTSA@health.ny.gov

Other Fish Information

Environmental Protection Agency
www.epa.gov/ost/fish

Food and Drug Administration
www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/ucm110591.htm

New York State Fishing

Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)
www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/fishing.html

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Fishing Marine Waters

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