

Catch the Latest Advice

health.ny.gov/fish

**MAP
INSIDE**

WESTERN REGION

Health Advice on Eating Fish You Catch

for Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie,
Genesee, Niagara, Orleans, and
Wyoming counties



Why We Have Advice

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 inside map)



Fish from waters that are close to industrial sources are more likely to be contaminated than fish from other waters. **In the Western Region, Lake Erie fish are generally less contaminated than Lake Ontario fish.** This is because Lake Ontario has been more affected by certain industrial chemicals. Salmon, trout, and other fish are known to move from lakes into tributaries, such as Oak Orchard Creek. The lake advice also applies to its tributaries up to the first barrier that stops fish from moving upstream, such as a dam or waterfall.

Who You Are



People who can bear children (under 50) and children under 15 (the sensitive population) are advised to limit the kinds of fish they eat and how often they eat them. People 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.

People beyond their childbearing years and those who do not bear children (the general population) may face fewer health risks from some chemicals. For that reason, the advice for the general population allows them to eat more kinds of sportfish and more often (see inside table).

What You Catch



There is specific advice about limiting or not eating certain kinds of fish in the Western Region (see inside table). 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. You can also choose fish from waterbodies that are not listed on the table inside, and follow the general advice to eat up to four meals per month.

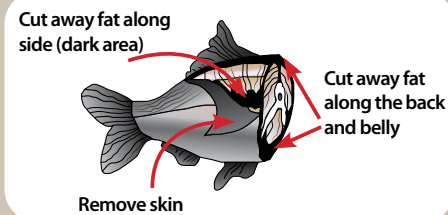


Health Risks

The primary chemicals of concern in the Western Region are PCBs, dioxin, and mirex. 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. (Visit www.health.ny.gov/fish for more info.)

Tips for Healthier Eating

- PCBs, dioxin, and mirex 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.

- To reduce exposures to PCBs, dioxin, and mirex, avoid or eat less American eel, carp, lake trout, salmon, channel catfish, and white perch, because these Western Region fish tend to have higher levels of these contaminants.
- 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 the sensitive population.
- 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.

Western Region Waters with Specific Advice







What about tributaries and connected waters?

The specific advice applies to tributaries and connected waters if there are no dams, falls, or barriers to stop the fish from moving upstream or downstream. This is because chemicals remain in fish when they move from one waterbody to another.


Color-coded Fish Advisory County Maps are available at www.health.ny.gov/fish/maps.htm for some counties that show how waters are connected and what advisories apply to tributaries.

Western Region Waters with Specific Advisories:





 Location & Tributaries <i>(Chemical of Concern)</i>	 Fish	 General Population	 Sensitive Population
All waters NOT listed (Western Region)	All fish	Up to 4 meals/month	Up to 4 meals/month
Buffalo River and Inner and Outer Harbor (PCBs)	Carp, Channel catfish	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT
	Brown bullhead, Largemouth bass, Smallmouth bass	Up to 1 meal/month	Up to 1 meal/month
	Rock bass ¹ , Yellow perch ¹	Up to 4 meals/month	Up to 4 meals/month
	All other fish	Up to 4 meals/month	Up to 1 meal/month
Cayuga Creek (Dioxin)	All fish	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT
Delaware Park Lake/Hoyt Lake (PCBs)	Carp	Up to 1 meal/month	DON'T EAT
	All other fish	Up to 4 meals/month	DON'T EAT
Eighteenmile Creek, upstream of Burt Dam (PCBs)	All fish	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT
Eighteenmile Creek, downstream of Burt Dam (PCBs)	Brown trout, Chinook salmon, Coho salmon, Rainbow trout	Up to 1 meal/month	Up to 1 meal/month
	All other fish	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT
Erie Canal, between Lockport & Niagara River (PCBs)	Carp	Up to 1 meal/month	DON'T EAT
	All other fish	Up to 4 meals/month	DON'T EAT

The sensitive population refers to people who may bear children under the age of 50 and children under 15. The general population refers to everyone else.

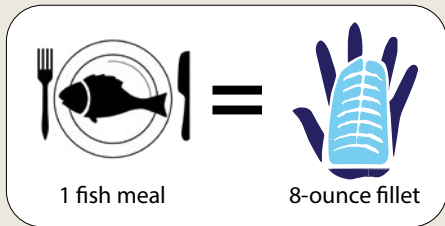
¹ These fish are a good choice for the whole family. See www.health.ny.gov/fish/background.htm for more information about how advisories are set.

 Location & Tributaries <i>(Chemical of Concern)</i>	 Fish	 General Population	 Sensitive Population
Lake Erie (PCBs)	Brown bullhead ¹ , Burbot ¹ , Rock bass ¹ , Rudd ¹ , Yellow perch ¹	Up to 4 meals/month	Up to 4 meals/month
	Carp	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT
	Channel catfish	Up to 1 meal/month	Up to 1 meal/month
Lake Ontario (PCBs, Mirex, Dioxin)	All other fish	Up to 4 meals/month	Up to 1 meal/month
	Brown bullhead ¹ , Rainbow smelt ¹ , Rock bass ¹ , White sucker ¹ , Yellow perch ¹	Up to 4 meals/month	Up to 4 meals/month
	Lake trout	Greater than 25", up to 1 meal/month; Less than 25", up to 4 meals/month	All sizes, up to 1 meal/month
Lewiston Reservoir/Power Reservoir (PCBs)	Carp	Up to 1 meal/month	DON'T EAT
	Channel catfish	Up to 1 meal/month	Up to 1 meal/month
	Brown trout	Greater than 20", up to 1 meal/month; Less than 20", up to 4 meals/month	All sizes, up to 1 meal/month
Lewiston Reservoir/Power Reservoir (PCBs)	All other fish	Up to 4 meals/month	Up to 1 meal/month
	Carp	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT
	All other fish	Up to 4 meals/month	DON'T EAT

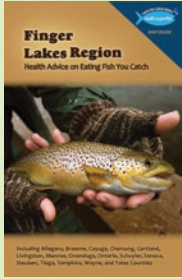


 Location & Tributaries <i>(Chemical of Concern)</i>	 Fish	 General Population	 Sensitive Population
Niagara River, upstream of Niagara Falls (PCBs)	Same advice as Lake Erie		
Niagara River, downstream of Niagara Falls (PCBs, Mirex, Dioxin)	Same advice as Lake Ontario Except Lake trout	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT
Scajaquada Creek (PCBs)	All fish	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT
Waterport Reservoir/Lake Alice (PCBs)	Channel catfish	Up to 1 meal/month	Up to 1 meal/month
	All other fish	Up to 4 meals/month	Up to 1 meal/month

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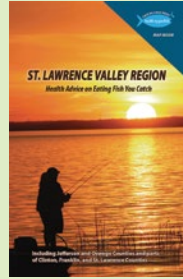


Other Free Publications Available:



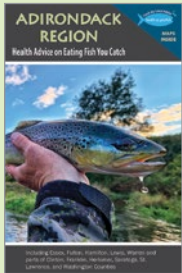
Finger Lakes Region Advice

Advice for Allegany, Broome, Cayuga, Chemung, Cortland, Livingston, Monroe, Onondaga, Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins, Wayne, and Yates counties



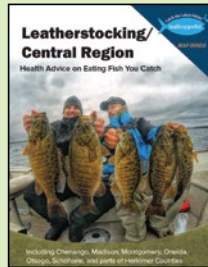
St. Lawrence Valley Region Advice

Advice for Jefferson and Oswego counties and parts of Clinton, Franklin, and St. Lawrence counties



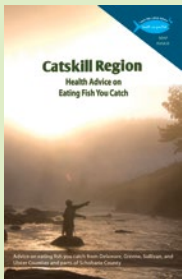
Adirondack Region Advice

Advice for Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Herkimer, Lewis, Saratoga, St. Lawrence, Warren, and Washington counties



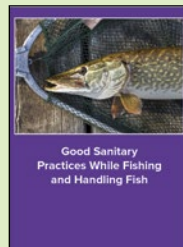
Leatherstocking/Central Region Advice

Advice for Chenango, Madison, Montgomery, Oneida, Otsego, Schoharie, and parts of Herkimer counties



Catskill Region Advice

Advice for Delaware, Greene, Sullivan, and Ulster counties



Good Sanitary Practices While Fishing and Handling Fish

Information about fishing and cooking fish caught in waters with microorganism concerns

Common Fish of the Western Region



Bluegill



Brown bullhead



Brown trout



Burbot



Carp



Channel catfish



Chinook salmon



Coho salmon



Crappie



Freshwater drum/
Sheepshead



Lake trout



Lake whitefish



Largemouth bass



Rainbow trout



Rock bass



Smallmouth bass



Walleye



White perch



White sucker



Yellow perch

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, the FDA and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) advise pregnant people, people who may become pregnant, nursing mothers, and young children to avoid eating shark, swordfish, king mackerel, tuna (bigeye), marlin, orange roughy, and tilefish.

Visit www.fda.gov/fishadvice or www.epa.gov/fishadvice for more information.

More Information

New York State Fish Advisories

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

New York State Fishing

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

DEC Region 8

(Genesee and Orleans counties)
Avon Office
(585) 226-2466
fwfish8@dec.ny.gov

DEC Region 9

(Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Erie, Niagara and Wyoming counties)

Buffalo Office (716) 851-7000 fwfish9@dec.ny.gov	Allegany Sub-Office (716) 372-0645 fwfish9@dec.ny.gov
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