

Catch the Latest Advice

health.ny.gov/fish

MAP INSIDE

NORTHERN HUDSON RIVER

Health Advice on Eating Fish You Catch
in Saratoga, Warren & Washington 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



Fish from waters that are affected by industrial sources are more likely to be contaminated than fish from other waters. **In this stretch of the Hudson River for example, fish upstream of the Corinth dam are generally less contaminated than those downstream.**

This is because the upper Hudson River has been less affected by certain industrial chemicals. Some fish are known to move from rivers into tributaries, such as from the Hudson River into the Moses Kill. The river advice also applies to its tributaries up to the first barrier that stops fish from moving upstream or downstream, such as a dam or waterfall.

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 age 50 and over and men age 15 and over 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 from the Hudson River.

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 to fish from waterbodies without specific advice and follow the general advice to eat up to four meals per month (maps of these waters are available at www.health.ny.gov/fish/maps.htm).

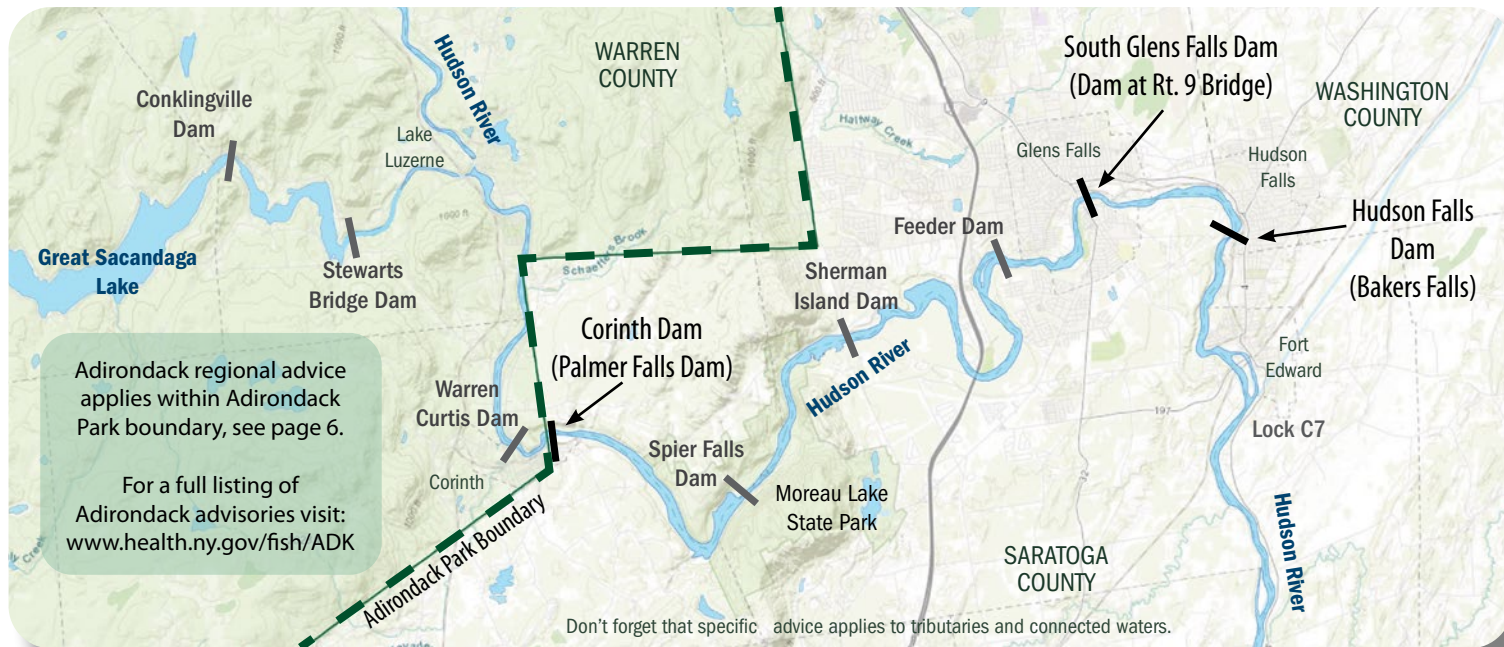
Chemicals in the Northern Hudson Region

The primary chemicals of concern in the Northern Hudson Region are PCBs and mercury.

- PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) are man-made chemicals that were banned in the 1970s and 1980s. PCBs remain in the environment and accumulate in the fat of fish and other animals.
- Mercury occurs naturally, but it is also released into our environment from sources like coal combustion. Testing of fish in the Adirondack and Catskill Regions and in some NYS reservoirs has shown certain species of fish have higher levels of mercury than in other parts of the state.

Health Risks

Fish can have chemical levels thousands of times more than the surrounding water. 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.)



Where can the whole family eat the fish?

There are many great local fishing waters where the whole family can eat fish up to four (half pound) meals per month of fish they catch:

This includes:

- Ballston Lake
- Dwaas Kill
- Kayaderosseras Creek
- Moreau Lake
- Round Lake
- Saratoga Lake
- Batten Kill, upstream of Clark Mills Lower Dam
- Mettawee River, upstream of waterfalls at Thomas Rd & Upper Tpke
- Carters Pond
- Cossayuna Lake
- Dead Lake

Northern Hudson River Advice:

	Fish	Everyone
Upstream of Corinth Dam	All fish	Follow Adirondack Regional Advisory, see page 6.
Corinth Dam to South Glens Falls Dam	Carp, Channel catfish	DON'T EAT
	All other fish	Follow Adirondack Regional Advisory, see page 6.
South Glens Falls Dam to Hudson Falls Dam	All fish	DON'T EAT
Hudson Falls Dam to Federal Dam (Troy)	All fish	Take no fish. Eat no fish. (DEC catch and release regulations apply)

For other waters in Saratoga & Washington Counties visit www.health.ny.gov/fish/HV

Tips for Reducing PCBs

- PCBs 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, avoid or eat less carp, channel catfish, and white perch because these fish tend to have higher levels of these contaminants.

Tips for Avoiding Mercury

- The only way to reduce how much mercury you get from fish is to eat less contaminated fish.
- To reduce exposures to mercury, avoid or eat less largemouth and smallmouth bass, northern pike, pickerel, and larger walleye and yellow perch because these fish tend to have higher mercury levels.
- Mercury is distributed throughout a fish's muscle tissue (the part you eat), rather than in the fat and skin. Trimming and skinning will not reduce the amount of mercury in a fish meal.

Tips for Healthier 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.
- 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.

Adirondack Regional Advisory

NYS DOH has issued regional advice for **all waters** within the Adirondack Region because the fish have been more affected by mercury. Everyone should follow the advice below when fishing from Adirondack waters. Check for additional specific advisories for certain waterbodies at www.health.ny.gov/fish/ADK.

Walleye	
Men 15 and Over & Women 50 and Over	Women Under 50 & Children Under 15
Greater than 19", DON'T EAT; Less than 19", up to 1 meal/month	DON'T EAT

Chain pickerel		Lake trout		Rock bass		Smallmouth bass	
Largemouth bass		Northern pike		Yellow perch greater than 10 inches			
Men 15 and Over & Women 50 and Over				Women Under 50 & Children Under 15			
Up to 1 meal/month				DON'T EAT			

Best Choice Fish					
All other fish including:					
Black crappie	Bluegill	Pumpkinseed	Brook trout	Brown trout	Rainbow trout
Bullhead	White sucker	Freshwater drum	Tiger muskellunge	Muskellunge	
	White perch			Yellow perch less than 10 inches	
Men 15 and Over & Women 50 and Over			Women Under 50 & Children Under 15		
Up to 4 meals/month			Up to 1 meal/month		

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 women, women 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/hudsonriverfish
www.health.ny.gov/fish
(518) 402-7800
(800) 458-1158
email BTSA@health.ny.gov

For detailed maps of this region visit:
www.health.ny.gov/fish/maps.htm

Cover photo courtesy of Jacqueline Donnelly

New York State Fishing

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

DEC Region 5

(Saratoga, Warren & Washington
counties)

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