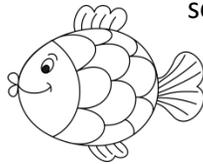


Is Fish Your Favorite Dish?

I have to admit, I am not much of a seafood lover. Is it a texture thing? I think it might be. I don't like spongy things and I cannot stand the way that fish smells. But according to my friends, if fish is spongy and smelly then it wasn't prepared right and it isn't fresh. Maybe that is my issue? I have never had fish prepared the way I like it. There was only one time in my life that I actually craved fish and that was during my first pregnancy. The truth is, most people like fish. In fact, some are even changing their eating habits to allow for fish. "Pescatarian" is a new term that refers to those who do not eat meat but who will consume a little bit of fish now and again. At Senior Nutrition most everyone loves salmon day!



Speaking of salmon, have you ever visited the local Nimbus fish hatchery? Talk about gaining an appreciation for fish as a species. If you haven't visited it lately, it is truly an amazing experience! To learn and see what the steelhead and salmon go through and what they sacrifice just to make it from the ocean back up the river to lay their eggs, it is truly sacrificial! I don't think that I realized how much work and effort it takes for them to procreate.

Not only do fish, like salmon, work hard to live but they also provide many nutrients that are beneficial to the overall health of those who consume them. Fish is an excellent source of protein because it is also low in saturated fat. Certain types of fish, like mackerel and sardines are also good sources of iron. Iron helps you maintain healthy red blood cells and carries oxygen throughout your body. Most fish is also a great source of B-vitamins like niacin, B6, and B-12. These help our body release energy, and maintain healthy immune and nervous systems. Some fish, like salmon and mackerel, are top sources for Vitamin D which promotes immunity and bone health. But in all honesty, probably the most notable nutrient fish is known for is the omega-3 fatty acids.

Nutrition Notes by Natalie

The two main omega-3s in fish are DHA (docosahexaenoic acid) and EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid). They are linked to prevention of asthma, depression, heart disease, high blood pressure, and other inflammatory conditions like rheumatoid arthritis. Omega-3s are highest in fatty fish like salmon, tuna, herring, mackerel, sardines, and lake trout.

Wanting to try to incorporate more fish in your diet? The American Heart Association recommends consuming fish at least twice a week, each serving being about 3 ½ ounces. Here are some interesting ways to meet that recommendation. Poach fresh salmon, flake and fold into reduced fat sour cream or Greek yogurt along with capers and dill. Serve on crisp toasts or thick cucumber slices. Make fresh fish salads using citrus segments and vinaigrettes. Like sardines? Most people probably would opt out, however, if you mash a can of sardines and add it to mash potatoes, then form them into a patty and broil you can serve them like a hamburger.

Overall fish is an amazingly healthy species. I am sure you have heard the saying before, "You are what you eat." That too, is true of fish. They literally are a product of their environment. Pollution, litter, and unsanitary conditions can affect the quality of the meat. Some people prefer to catch their own fish while others are satisfied buying it from the local market. Either way, in a recent article published in a leading medical journal, the benefits of eating fish far outweigh any risks.

So if you are like me and fish is not your dish, make it a point to at least get your omega-3s from an alternate source like walnuts or flaxseed. You can also supplement with either blue green algae or fish oil capsules. I toss the entire bottle in the freezer and take them frozen, it eliminates the fishy aftertaste. Bon appetite!