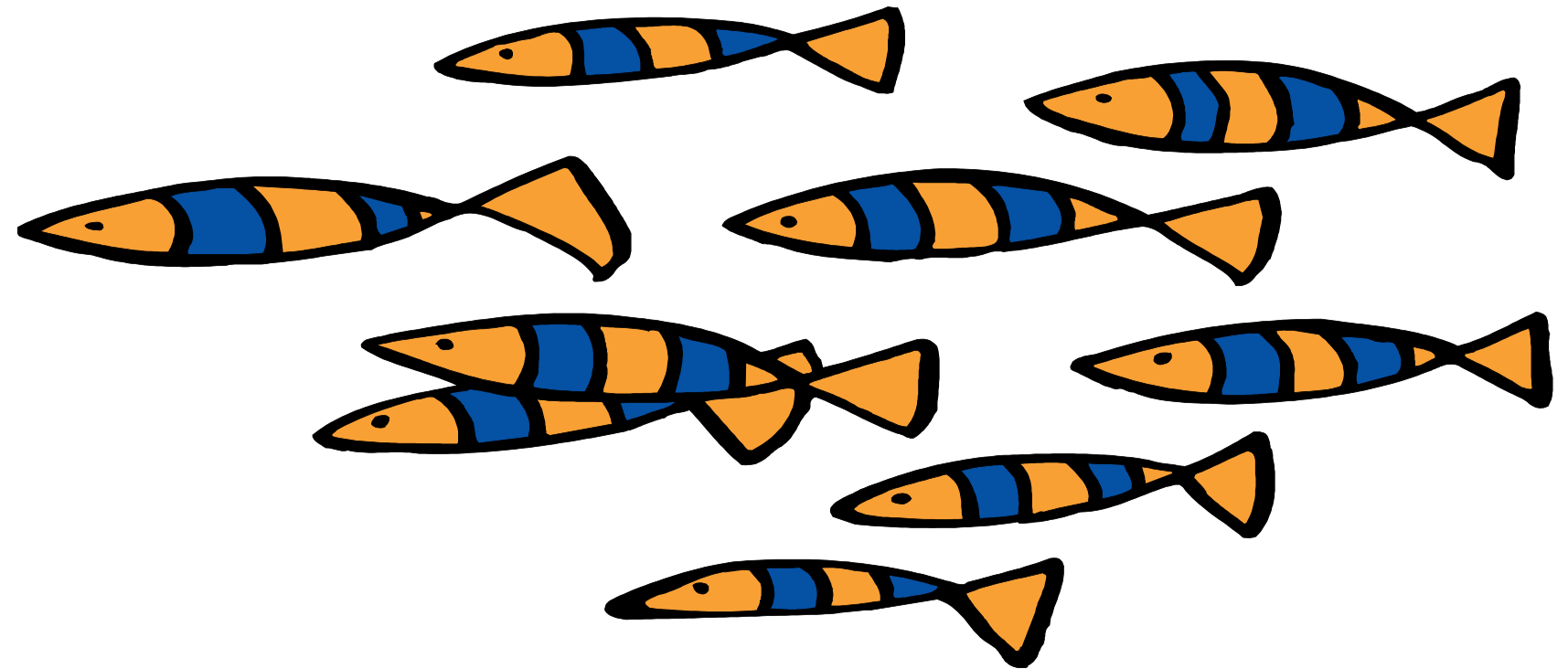
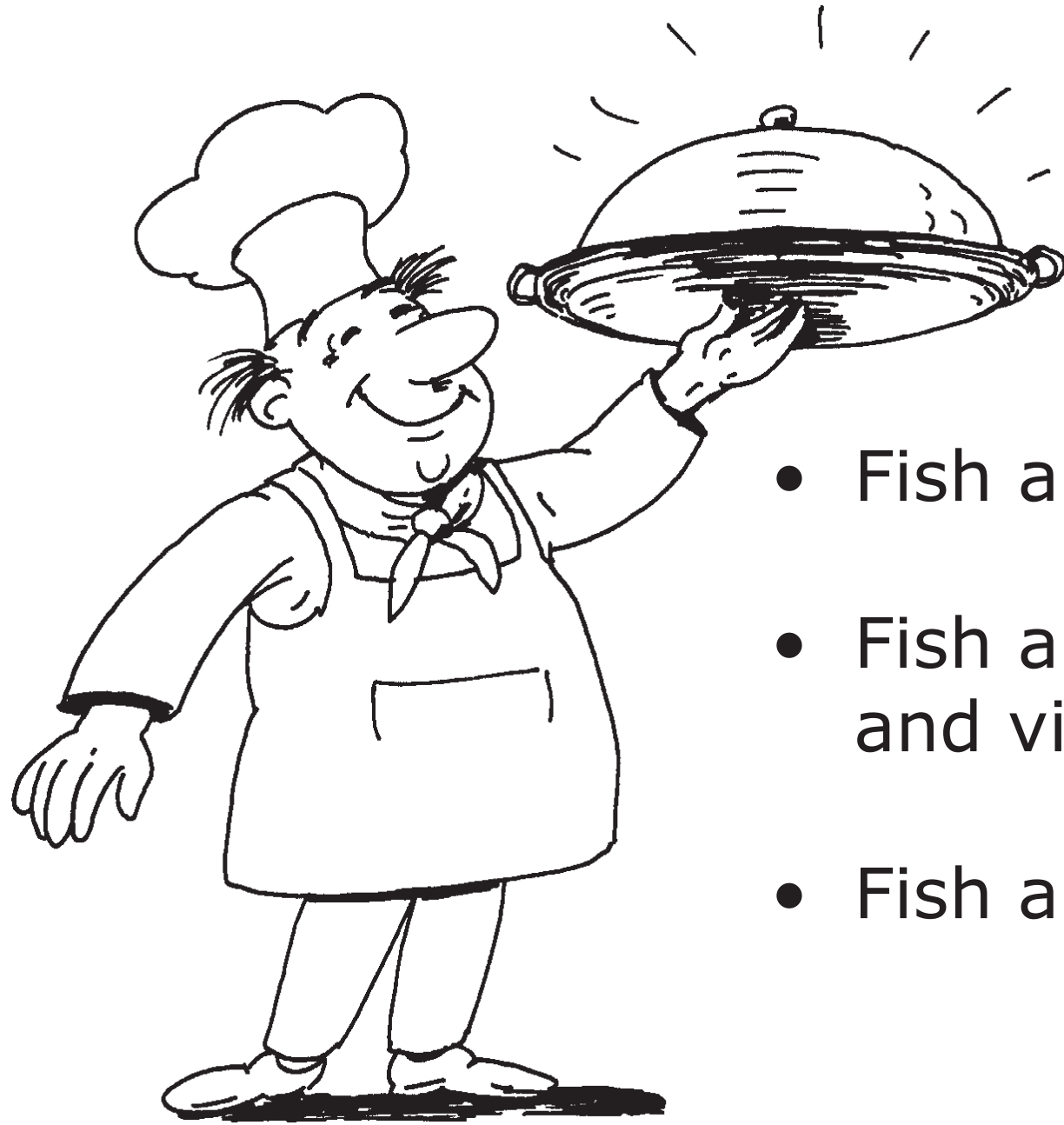


# CONTAMINANTS IN FISH & SEAFOOD

*A Guide to Safe Consumption*

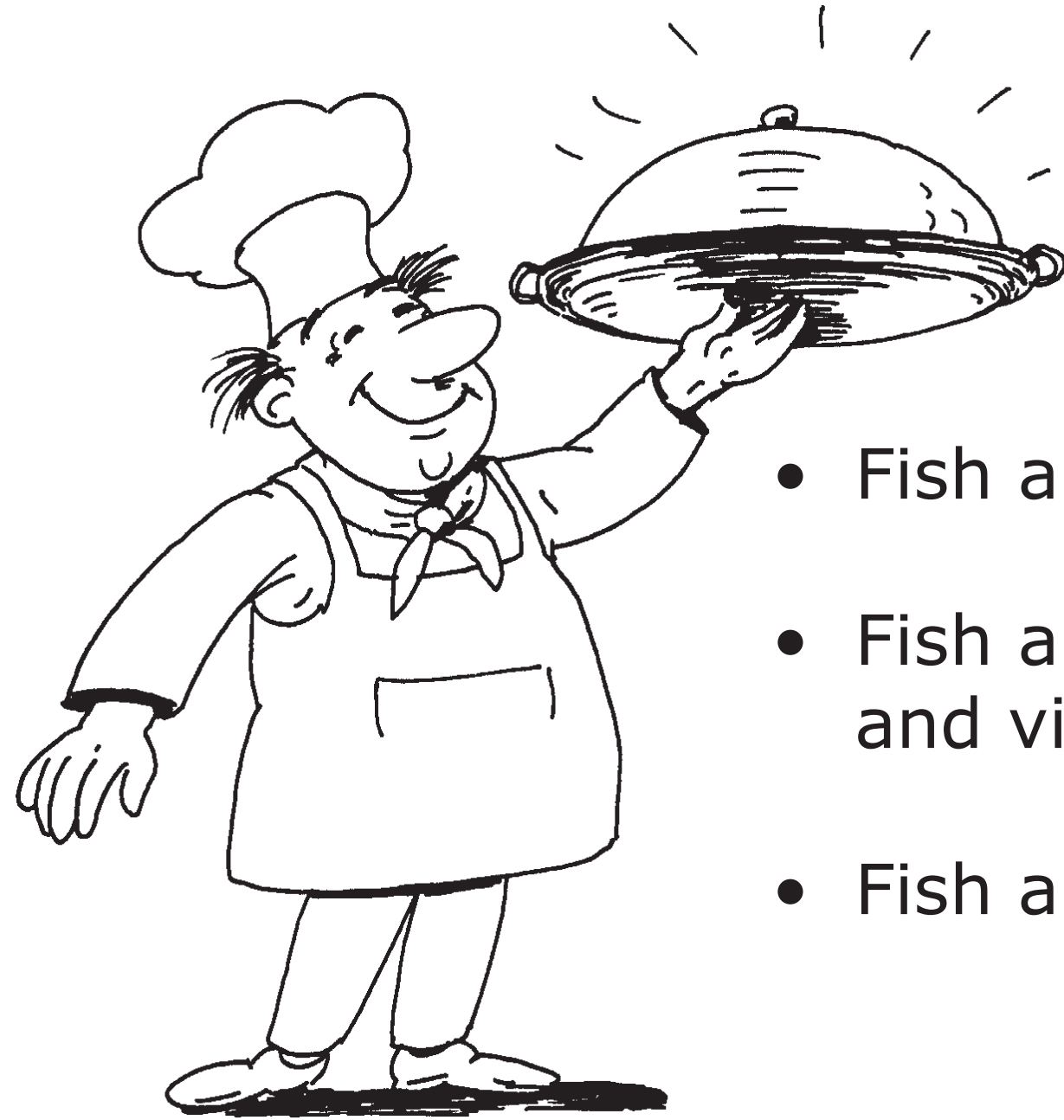


# Benefits of Eating Fish



- Fish are part of a healthy, well-balanced diet.
- Fish are a great source of proteins, minerals, and vitamins.
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side 2

# Comparison of Food Composition

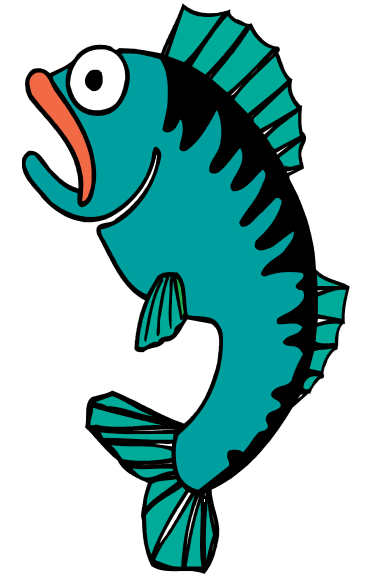
	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Calories</u>	<u>Protein (grams)</u>	<u>Fat (grams)</u>
Beef burger	3.5 oz.	219	27.4	11.3
Chicken roasted	3.5 oz.	166	31.6	3.4
Egg	1 large	82	6.5	5.8
Halibut	3.5 oz.	171	25.2	7.0
Herring	3.5 oz.	98	17.5	2.6
Ocean Perch	3.5 oz.	227	19.0	13.3

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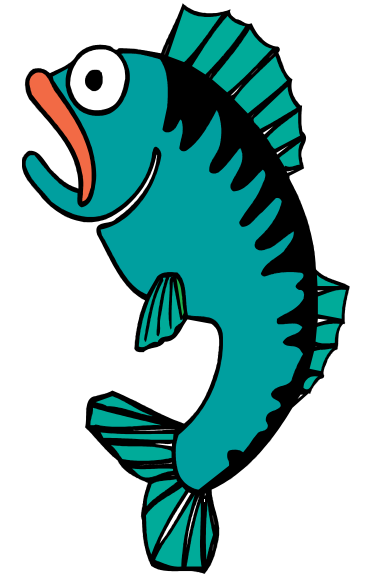
side 2

# Concerns about Eating Fish



- Fish can contain harmful chemicals called contaminants.
- These chemicals can cause long-lasting health problems.
- Contaminated fish don't look, smell, or taste different, but can still be harmful.
- Be especially careful if you are pregnant, nursing a baby, or have a young child.

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# Mercury: The Effects on Babies and Young Children

- Mercury can be found in some Illinois fish.
- Mercury can build up in your body, and you probably won't know it.
- Pregnant women can pass mercury to their babies during pregnancies.
- Higher levels of mercury can damage the nervous system, particularly in children.
- Even low amounts of mercury can cause learning problems in babies and children.





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# PCBs: The Effects on Babies and Young Children

- PCBs can cause learning problems in children.
- Contact with PCBs during pregnancy or nursing can lead to behavior problems in children.



**Your exposure to these contaminants before pregnancy matters too!**



Women who may become pregnant should follow the fish consumption advice in this brochure, since traces of these contaminants may remain in your body for a period of time after ingestion. Over time, your body can rid itself of some contaminants; however, you can reduce your risk of exposure as well as your future child's risk by following the advice in this brochure as well as consulting your healthcare provider.

# PCBs:

## The Effects on Babies and Young Children

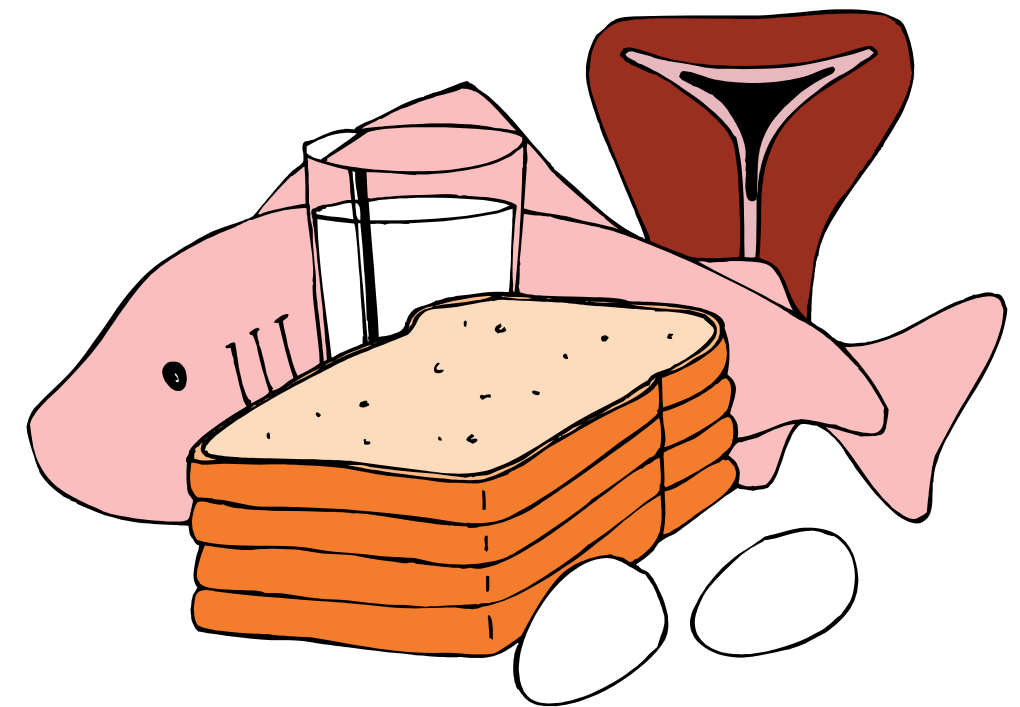
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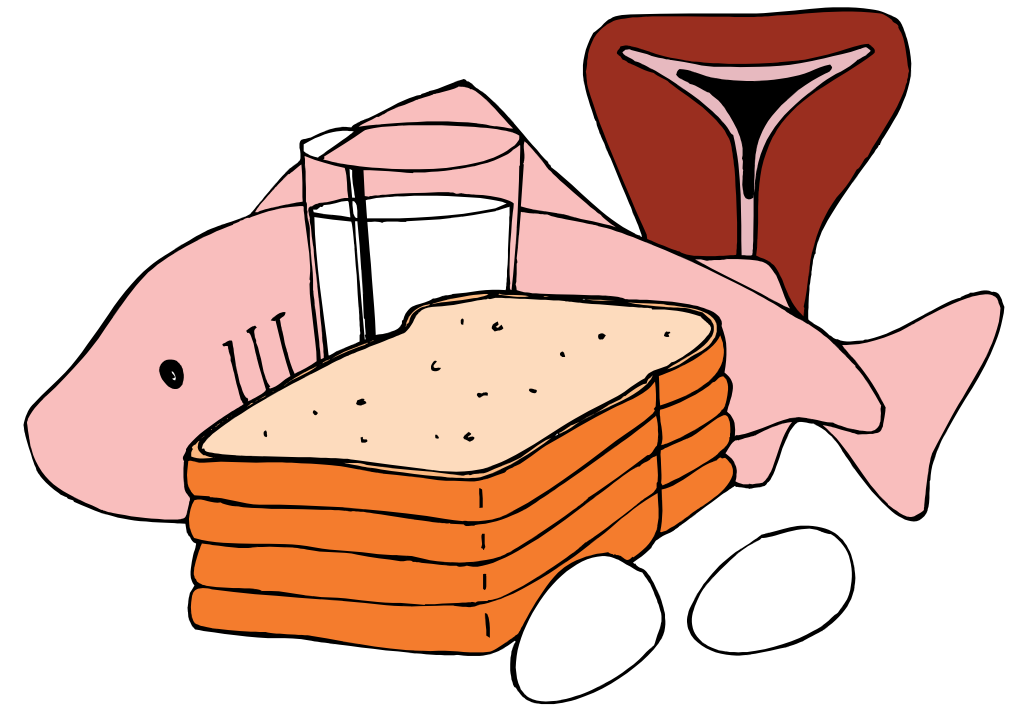
# Protecting Babies and Young Children

- Eat a variety of foods, including fish.
- Consider the fish source when making meal choices.
- Discuss the fish you eat with your health-care provider.
- Carefully choose the fish you eat before becoming pregnant, during pregnancy, and while nursing.
- Consider making changes in how you eat fish. (e.g., the kind of fish you eat; the source of the fish; how much you eat; how often; and how you prepare the fish)



# Protecting Babies and Young Children

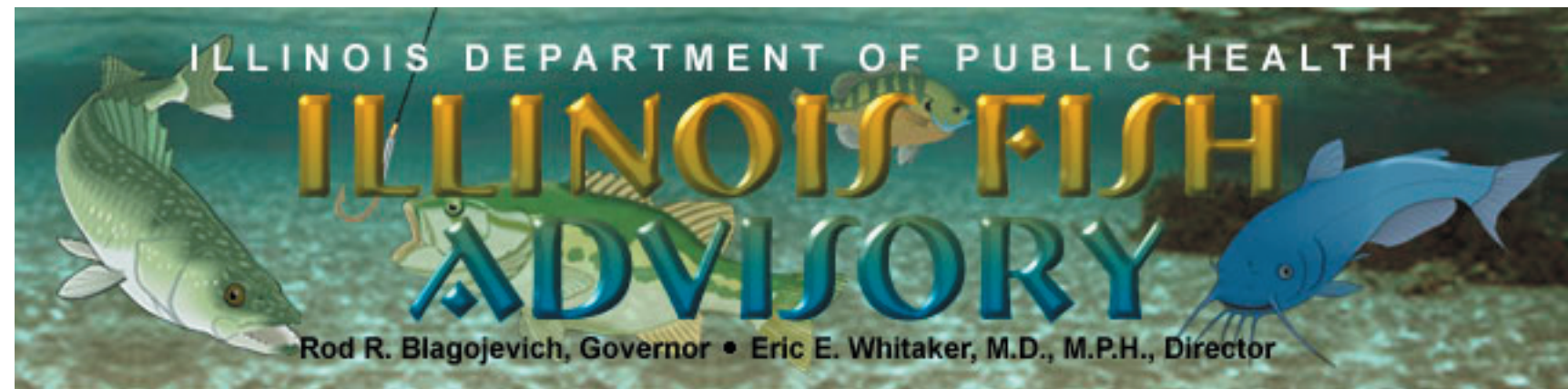
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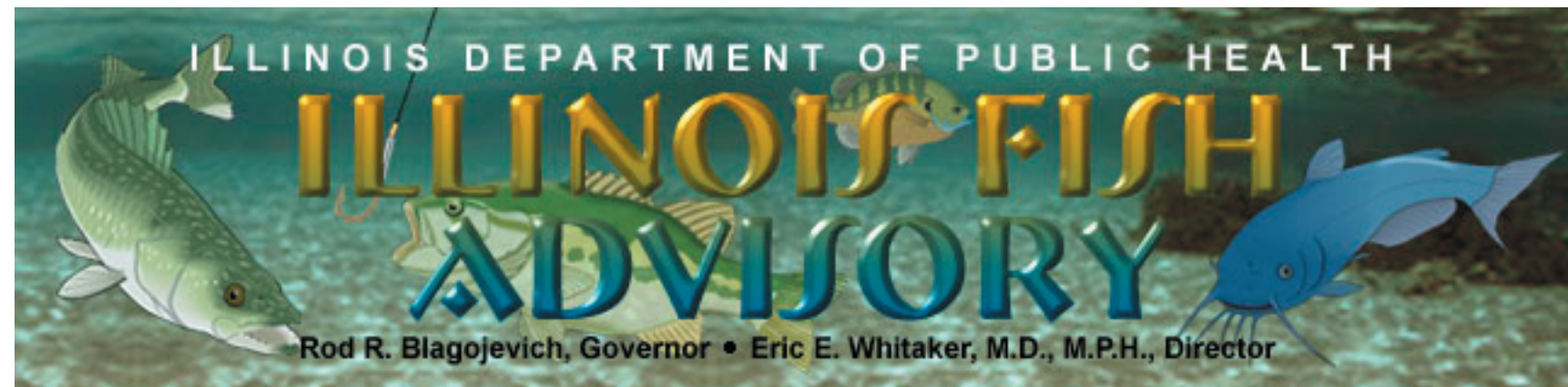
# What are Fish Consumption Advisories?

- Fish are analyzed for harmful chemicals.
- State and federal agencies create guidelines about fish in your diet.
- With these guidelines, you can eat fish wisely.



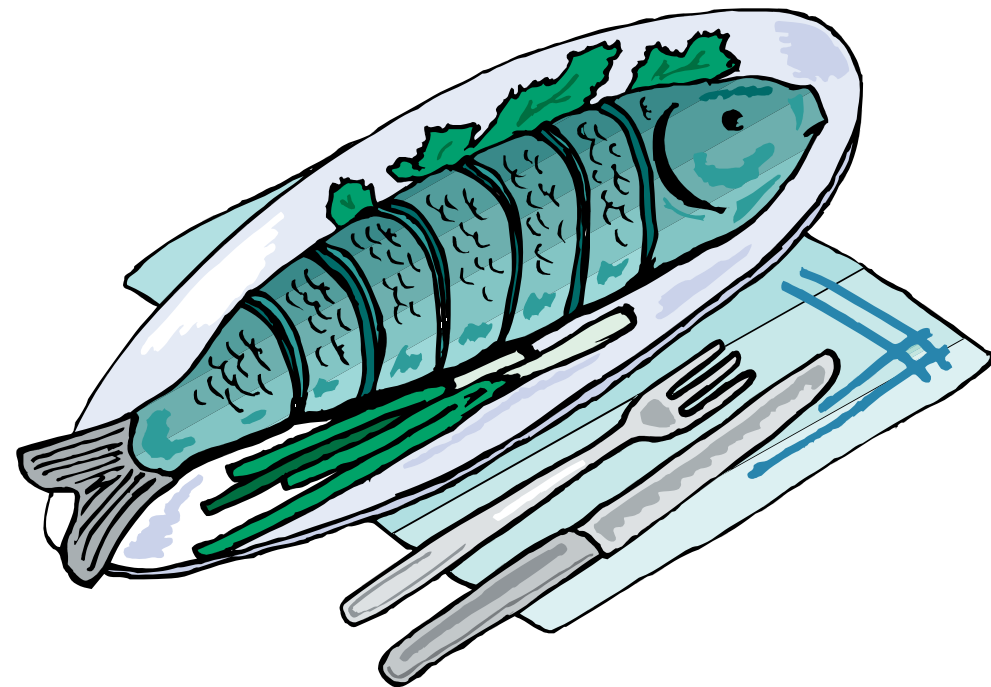
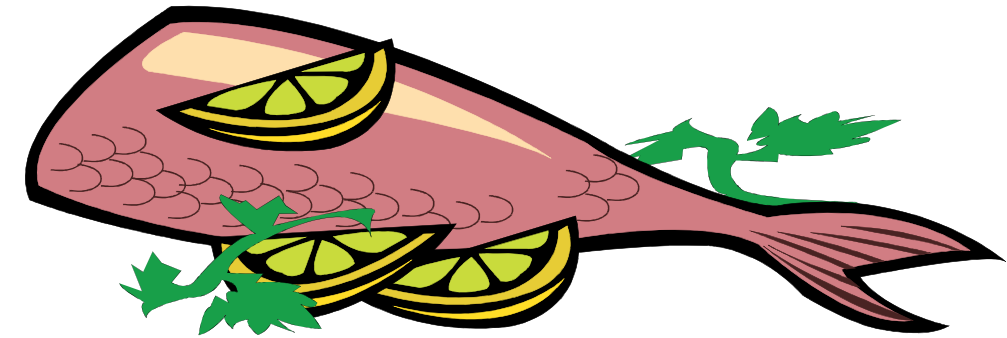
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# What Can You Learn from Fish Advisories?

- Which fish are unsafe to eat.
- Which fish you should eat less of.
- Which fish you can eat more of.

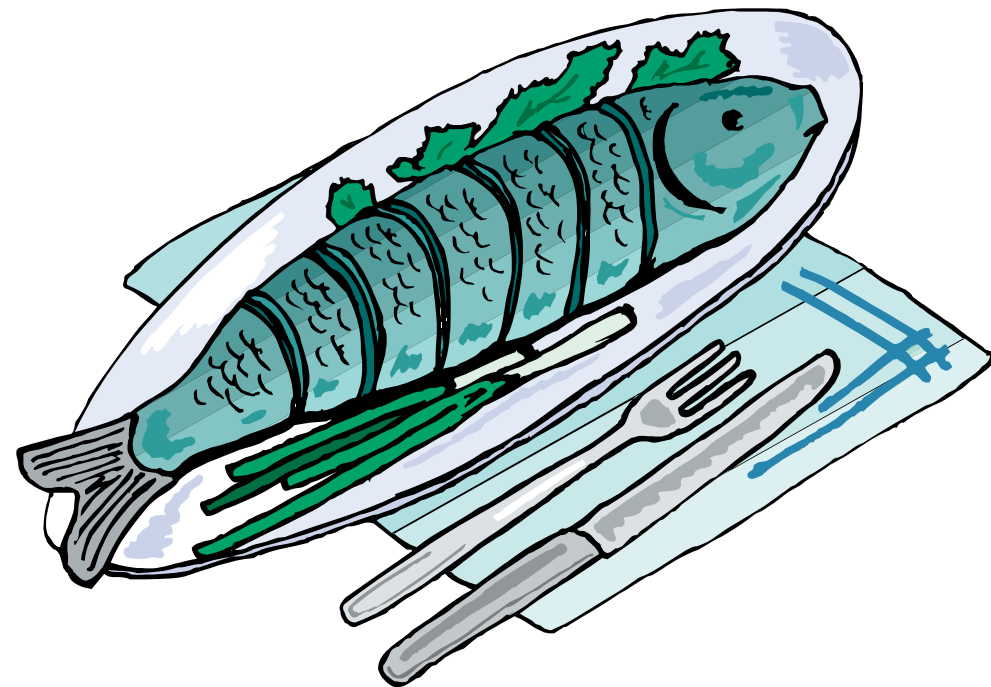
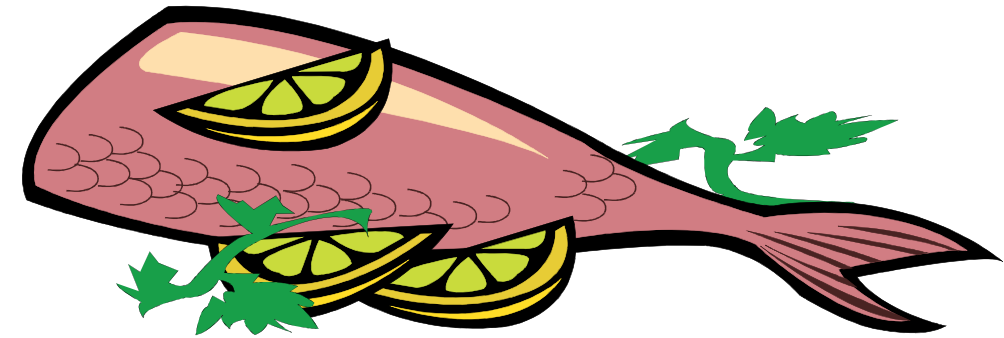


The current Illinois fish consumption advisories relate to fish that have higher levels of mercury, (PCBs) polychlorinated biphenyls and chlordane.



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# Who Should Follow Fish Consumption Advisory Guidelines?

- Pregnant or nursing women
- Women of childbearing age
- Children less than 15 years old



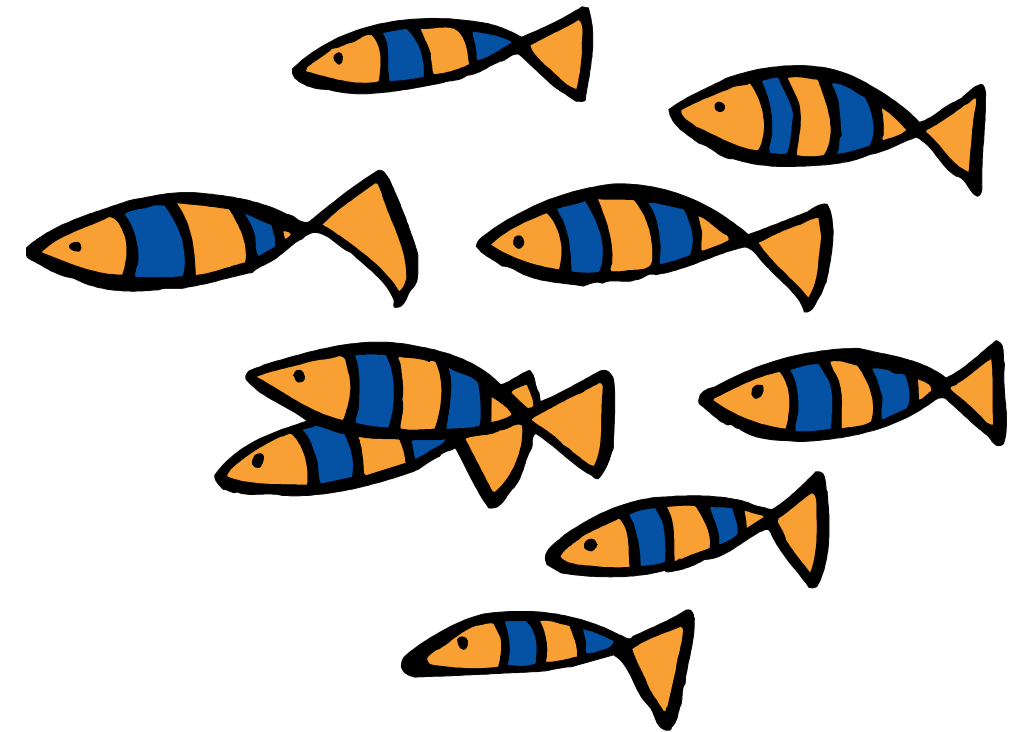
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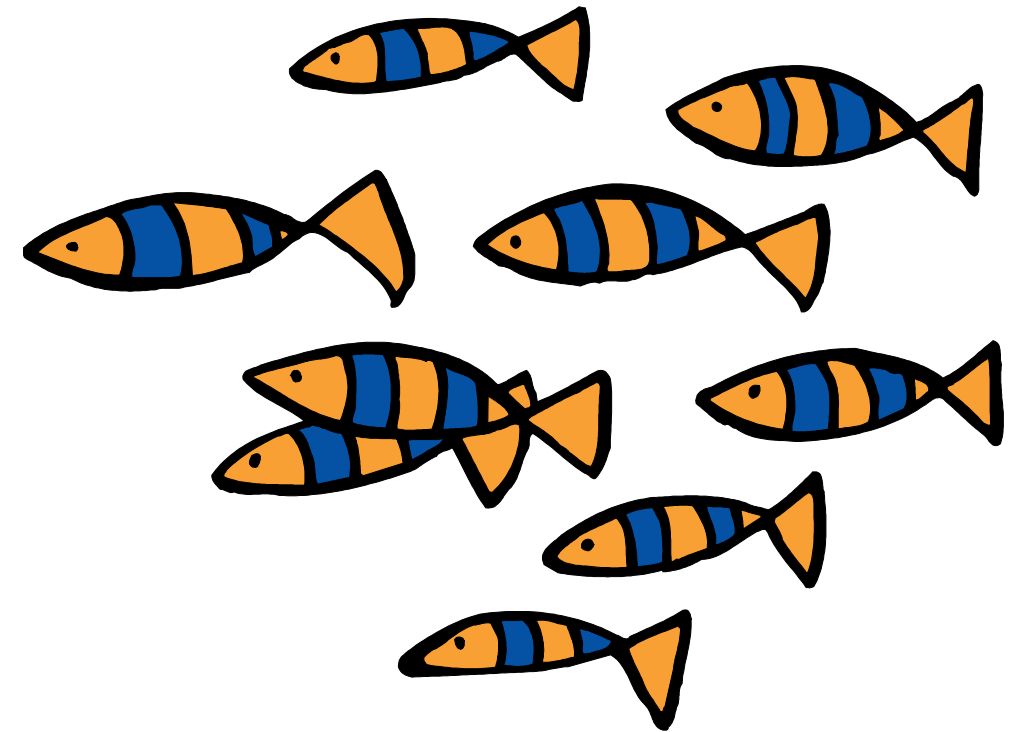
# Know Your Fish

- Fatty fish build up PCBs and chlordanane. (salmon and coho)
- Fish that eat other fish have more contaminants. (largemouth bass)
- Larger, older fish tend to have more contaminants than younger, smaller fish.
- Bottom-feeding fish build up more contaminants.



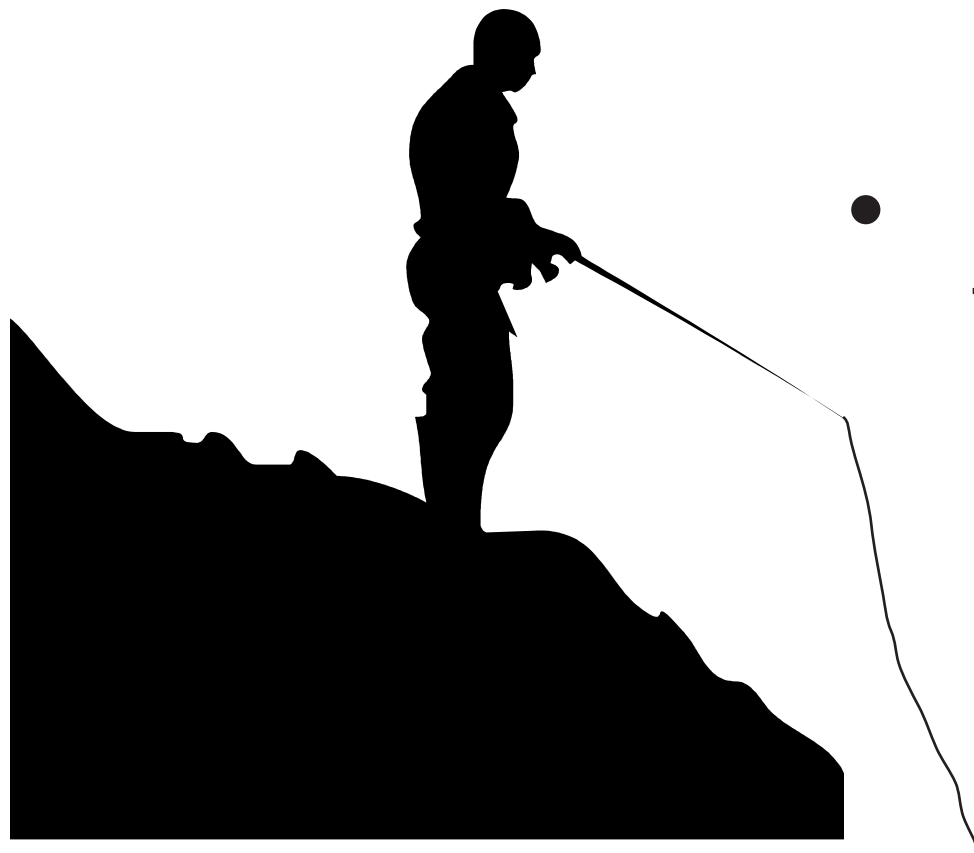
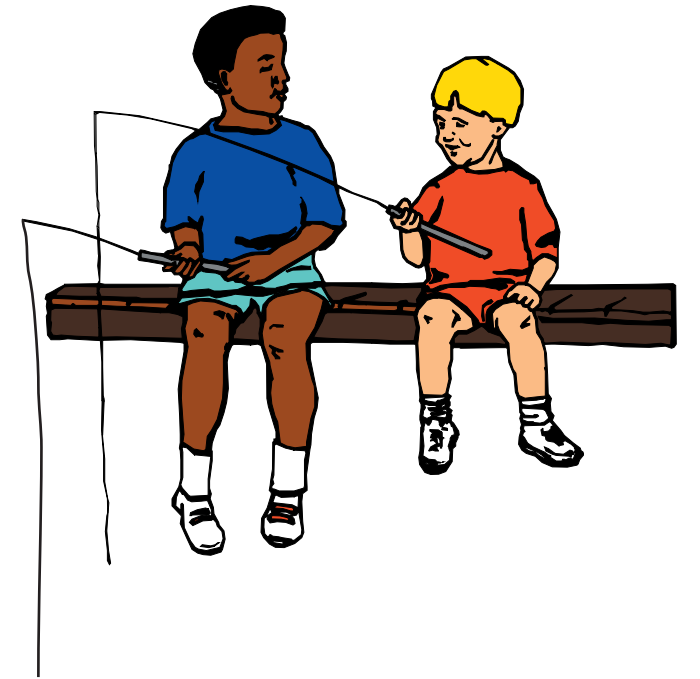
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# Consider Where Sportfish Were Caught

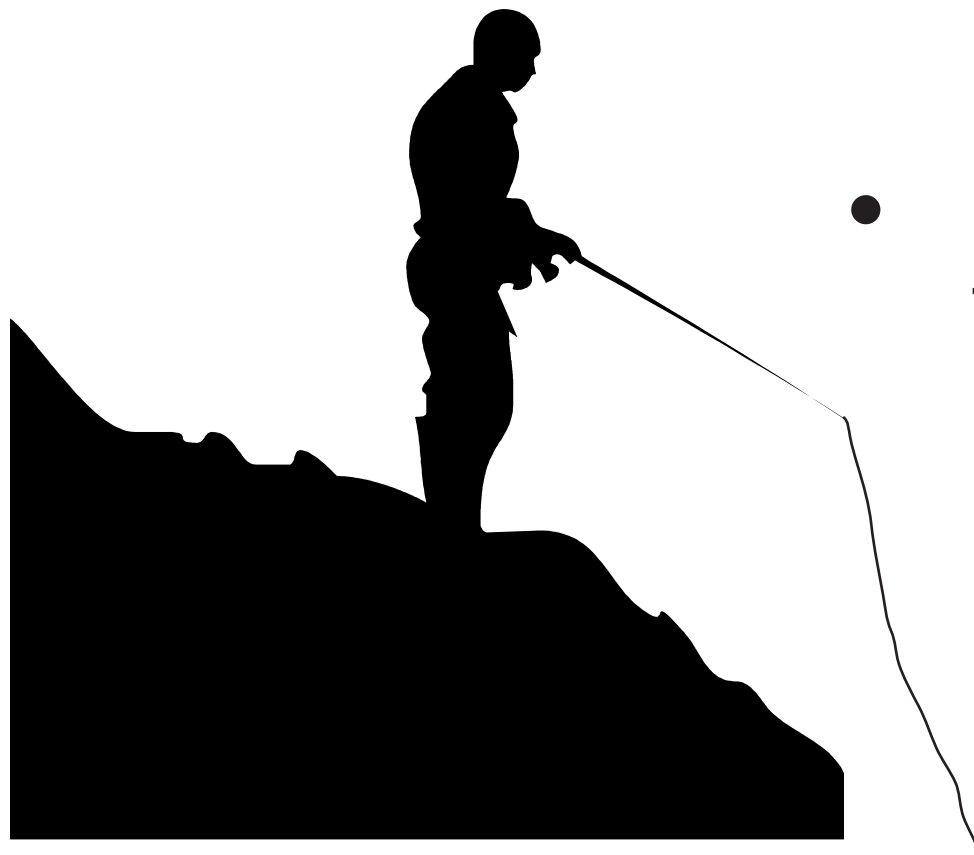
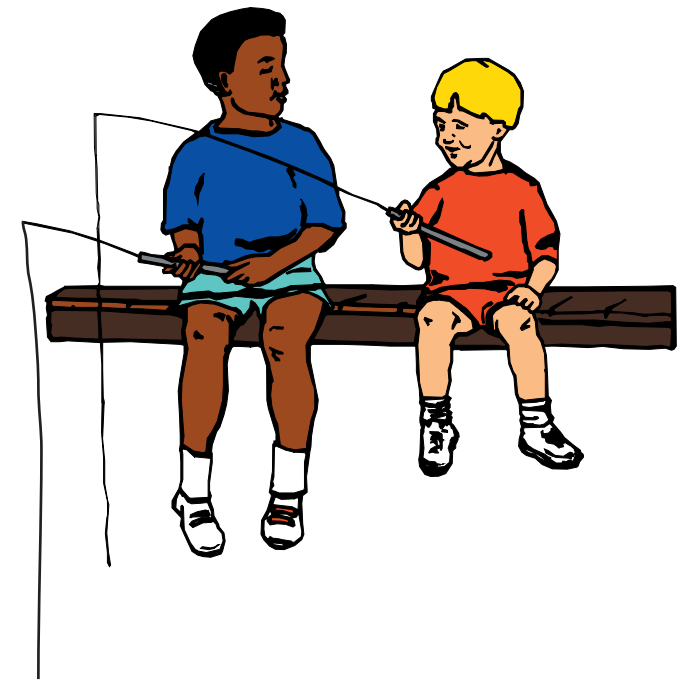
- Know where a fish was caught, then find out how often you should eat it.
- If you are given a fish, ask what species it is, where it was caught, and find out how often you can eat it.



- If you can't find out about where the fish was caught, then throw it away.

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# How to Prepare and Cook Fish Wisely



- Remove parts that are higher in fat. (the organs, head, skin and the dark fatty tissue along the lateral line, backbone and belly)
- Bake or broil the fish to allow fat to drain. (on an elevated rack that allows fats to drain to the pan below; do not fry in collected fats)
- After cooking, discard all liquids. (Do not reuse for soups or sauces.)



# How to Prepare and Cook Fish Wisely



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# Are Store-Bought Fish Safe?



- Many popular fish have low levels of mercury and are low in fat.
- Women who might become pregnant (or are pregnant) should eat less of some fish species. (shark, swordfish, canned tuna, tuna steaks)
- In general, it is safe to eat 12 ounces of cooked fish each week.

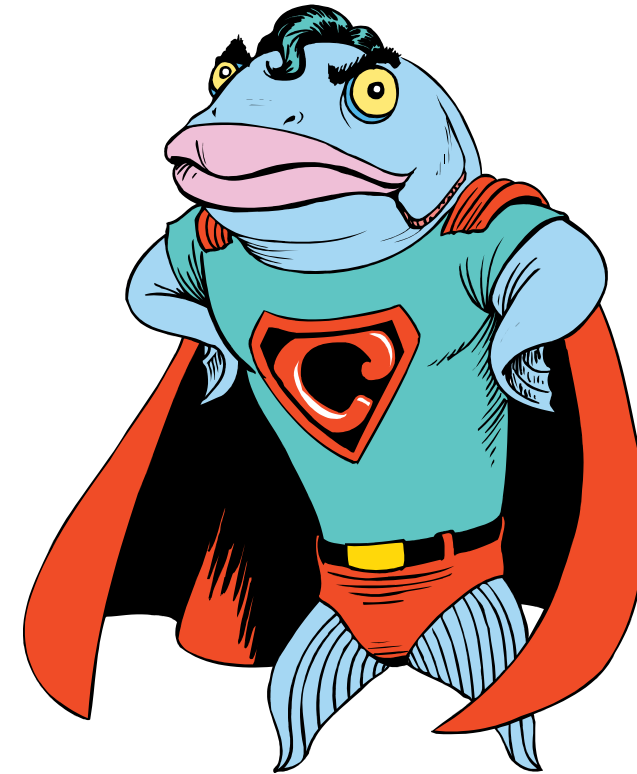
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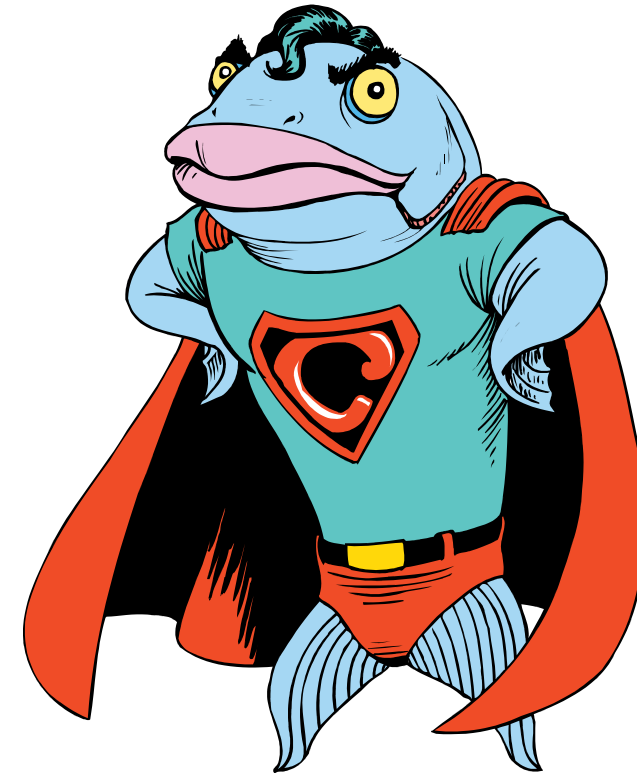
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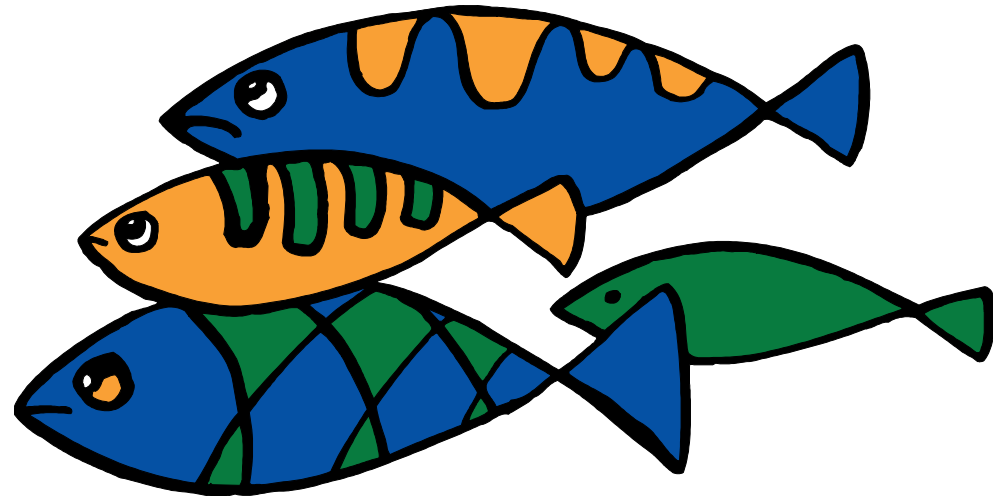
- Eat a variety of fish.
- Choose safer fish.
- Prepare and cook fish wisely.
- Know how often to eat fish.  
[the recommended number of times/week.]
- Make sure fish are a part of your healthy diet.



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## *A Guide to Safe Consumption*

