

GET REAL ABOUT
SEAFOOD



Fact Sheet

About Get Real About Seafood Campaign

- Celebrity chef and TV host, Melissa d'Arabian, and renowned cardiovascular specialist and former director of the Framingham Heart Study, Dr. William Castelli, teamed up with the National Fisheries Institute to launch Get Real About Seafood, an educational campaign that reaches healthcare professionals and the public to raise awareness about the powerful health benefits of seafood. The campaign provides the tools and resources to help people eat a diet rich in seafood.
- Visit www.GetRealAboutSeafood.com to find health information, recipes and tips to help include more seafood in weekly meals. Download a discussion guide to talk with your doctor about increasing the amount of seafood you and your family eat.
- Healthcare professionals can visit www.GetRealAboutSeafood.com to obtain resources that can be used for patient communication including:
 - Summaries of scientific studies about the health benefits of seafood
 - Recent authoritative recommendations, including the latest Dietary Guidelines for Americans
 - Patient discussion guide on the importance of eating more seafood
 - Recipes and nutrition facts

Americans' Seafood Eating Habits

- It is estimated the average American eats about one serving of seafood a week – that means most people need to (at least) double the amount of fish and shellfish they eat to meet the recommended 2 to 3 servings.ⁱ Additionally, consumer survey data shows 91 percent of parents with children 12 years and younger say their children aren't eating seafood twice a week.ⁱⁱ
- The North American diet has the second-lowest percentage of fish in the world (7%) — well below what's recommended in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA).ⁱⁱⁱ
- A survey of family practice physicians revealed that 85.2% of physicians agree that eating seafood provides significant health benefits. Yet, 60.6% recommend incorrect amounts or don't provide a recommendation on seafood consumption to patients.^{iv}
- Research suggests most people do not eat the weekly recommended amounts of seafood due to lack of knowledge about the health benefits and low confidence in selecting or preparing seafood.^v

Seafood Health Benefits

- Two recent scientific reports, the DGA and another from the World Health Organization (WHO), recommend the general population, as well as pregnant and breastfeeding women, eat 2 to 3 seafood meals (8 to 12 ounces) per week to boost brain health and avoid risk of developing heart disease. It's important to remember that fresh, frozen and canned or pouched seafood, such as canned or pouched tuna, all provide great health benefits.
- A recent study estimates 84,000 preventable deaths a year are attributable to low intake of omega-3 fatty acids in the United States.^{vi}

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- Eating seafood at least twice a week reduces the risk of heart disease by at least 30 percent, whether you already have heart disease or not.^{vii}
- The DGA recommends pregnant and breastfeeding women eat seafood 2 to 3 times per week to help improve their baby's eye and brain development.
- Omega-3s can help prevent or manage depression during and after pregnancy.^{viii}
- American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) suggests you can and should start introducing seafood to your child when they are 4 to 6 months old.^{ix}
- Taking fish oil supplements is not the same as eating seafood. Supplements only provide you with omega-3s – not with any of the other good-for-you nutrients found in fish. Public health experts agree that you should choose a variety of whole foods, including fish, to get all of the vitamins and minerals you need every day for good health.
- Science tells us that the omega-3s found in fish, such as tuna, have numerous health benefits. Omega-3s have been shown to:
 - Decrease blood triglyceride levels^{vii}
 - Slow the buildup of plaques that contribute to the “hardening of the arteries”^{vii}
 - Lower blood pressure slightly^{vii}
 - Help babies' growing eyes and brains^x
 - Reduce inflammation^{xi}

ⁱ U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. “Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010.” January 2011. Available at: <http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/DietaryGuidelines/2010/PolicyDoc/PolicyDoc.pdf>.

ⁱⁱ QSR Magazine. “Seafood Underserved to Kids.” 2009. January 2010.
<http://www.qsrmagazine.com/articles/news/story.phtml?id=9407>.

ⁱⁱⁱ Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. Contribution of Fish to Human Diet: Fish as a percentage of total animal protein intake. 2005.

^{iv} *Family Practice News*. *Family Practice News Seafood Survey*. March 2012.

^v Vision Critical. *Consumer Attitudes Towards Fish*. November 2011.

^{vi} Danaei G, Ding EL, Mozaffarian D, Taylor B, Rehm J, et al. (2009) The Preventable Causes of Death in the United States: Comparative Risk Assessment of Dietary, Lifestyle, and Metabolic Risk Factors. *PLoS Med* 6(4): e1000058.
doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.1000058

^{vii} Horn, L. V., PhD, RD., McCoin, M., MPH, RD., Kris-Etherton, P. M., PhD, RD., Burke, F., MS, RD., Carson, J. A. S., PhD, RD., Champagne, C. M., PhD, RD., Sikand, G., MA, RD. (2008, February). The Evidence for Dietary Prevention and Treatment of Cardiovascular Disease. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, 108(2).

^{viii} Harrison, L. (2001, November 1). *Psychology Today*. Eating fish during pregnancy and lactation may benefit mother and child. Available at: <http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/200111/eating-fish-during-pregnancy-and-lactation-may-benefit-mother-and-child>.

^{ix} American Academy of Pediatrics. *Switching To Solid Foods*. Available at: <http://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/feeding-nutrition/Pages/Switching-To-Solid-Foods.aspx>. Accessed February 24, 2012.

^x The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. Associations of maternal fish intake during pregnancy and breastfeeding duration with attainment of developmental milestones in early childhood: a study from the Danish National Birth Cohort. Available at: <http://www.ajcn.org/content/88/3/789.abstract>.

^{xi} Arthritis Today. Fish May Reduce Inflammation. Available at: <http://www.arthritis.org/nutrition-and-weight-loss/healthy-eating/food-and-inflammation/fish-inflammation.php>.