

## F is for Fish!

Presented by the Dietitians at Froedtert & Community Memorial

Salmon, swordfish, tuna and shark have been swimming around in the news lately. Which types of fish are safe to eat and how much is safe to consume?

The Food and Drug Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency have issued consumer advisories on the risks of methylmercury in fish. The draft advisory provides the following guidelines:

Pregnant women, women who might become pregnant and nursing mothers should follow these guidelines. Young children should follow the same guidelines except their serving sizes should be smaller.

- Do not eat shark, swordfish, king mackerel or tilefish. They contain high levels of mercury.
- Mercury levels vary in other fish. It is safe to eat up to 12 ounces (two or three meals) of other purchased fish and shellfish a week.
- You may eat up to six ounces of albacore tuna (one average meal) per week.
- Check local advisories about the safety of fish caught in local rivers and streams. If no advice is available, consume no more than six ounces per week and don't eat any other fish during the week.

Fish contain omega-3 fatty acids that may have beneficial effects on a variety of health problems. These include heart disease, stroke, mild high blood pressure, bone loss, Crohn's disease, cancers of the breast, colon and prostate and rheumatoid arthritis. The American Heart Association recommends two servings of fish per week. But what if you aren't a fish person? Meaning, you don't know how to select a good piece of fish in the market, or how to prepare it so it's easy and fun to eat. To help you along, here are some tips to take the worry out of buying, preparing and eating fish.

### **Buying Fish**

- **Whole Fish:** Look for one with red or pink gills and bright, clear eyes that are slightly protruding. Gray, sagging gills and sunken, pink and cloudy eyes are signs that the fish is anything but fresh.
- **Fillets or Steaks:** Check their aroma before you buy: They shouldn't smell "fishy". Fish should smell like the ocean, or a clean pond if it is from fresh water. This goes for the whole fish as well.
- **Fresh or Frozen?** The choice is yours. But be aware that breaded or seasoned frozen fish has much more fat, calories and sodium than unbreaded or unseasoned fish or fresh fish.

### **Preparing Fish**

↪ Baking rule-of-thumb: Measure fish at the thickest part and bake 10 minutes at 375° for every inch of thickness.

↪ To bake fish, lay it on a bed of thinly sliced or chopped vegetables such as onions, spinach, mushrooms, zucchini, tomatoes, or parsley. Top the fish with any seasonings that appeal to you. The fish won't stick to your baking dish and will taste delicious.

↪ Baking fish in milk (pour a small amount in the bottom of the baking dish) helps remove some of the fishy taste.

### **Eliminating Fish Odor**

↪ Clean cutting boards and utensils with soap and hot water. You can also rub them with sliced lemon.

↪ To remove fish smell from your hands, pour some vinegar on your hands, rub them together and rinse well. Rubbing your hands with a lemon wedge or salt and water also works well.

↪ While the fish is cooking, simmer two tablespoons of vinegar in two cups of water, or try simmering cinnamon, cloves and orange slices.

## **Fish Tacos** (one of my favorites!)

1 lb boneless red snapper or any white fish fillets  
1 small clove of garlic chopped  
1/2 tsp of oregano  
1/4 tsp of salt  
2 tbsp of canola oil  
1 medium tomato finely chopped  
1/4 cup of chopped white onion  
1 serrano chile minced with seeds  
2 tsps fresh lime juice  
2 tbsps cilantro chopped  
8(6 to 7 inch) tortiila

Season the fish with garlic, oregano and salt. Heat oil in skillet and cook fish approximately 3 minutes a side or until flakes easily with fork. Once done flake apart fish in a bowl.

When fish is cool add tomato, onion, garlic, serrano chile, lime juice and cilantro. Toss gently to mix.

Warm tortilla on hot skillet for 15 seconds on each side. Spoon fish mixture on tortilla to serve.