

Study Says Eating Fish Leads To Better Health

(NAPSA)—Eating more fish is good for your health. That's the finding of research conducted by the Harvard Center for Risk Analysis (HCRA) at the Harvard School of Public Health.

The study, "A Quantitative Analysis of the Risks and Benefits Associated with Changes in Fish Consumption," analyzed the potential impact of consumer reactions to federal advisories that warn about the effects of mercury exposure from fish. Advisories could be misinterpreted and keep people from eating fish and seafood.

On average, Americans consume less than half the weekly intake of fish recommended by the federal government, in part due to fears of mercury exposure. However, the immense health benefits of fish and seafood far outweigh the minute risk of mercury contamination from commonly consumed fish.

"Fish are an excellent source of omega-3 fatty acids, which may protect against coronary heart disease and stroke, and are thought to aid in the neurological development of unborn babies," said Joshua Cohen, lead author and senior research associate at HCRA. "If that information gets lost in how the public perceives this issue, then people may inappropriately curtail fish consumption and increase their risk for adverse health outcomes."

Since the body cannot manufacture omega-3 fatty acids, people rely on fish to provide this essential compound.

Eating less fish was also linked to a significant increase in the risk of heart disease and stroke.

The study concluded that pregnant women, who are at far greater risk for mercury exposure, could increase the cognitive development benefits for their unborn child by eating the recommended



A recent study by the Harvard Center for Risk Analysis found that fish is a healthful food for people of all ages.

servings of fish per week and choosing from a variety of fish and seafood low in mercury. The benefit from fish consumption during pregnancy could amount to an increase in IQ level for the newborn.

"There is no debate within the scientific community that the fatty acids in fish are essential for human health. Study after study demonstrates that from birth to old age, omega-3 fatty acids confer important health benefits, from optimal brain function and the reduced risk of heart attack and stroke to improved eye health," said Joyce Nettleton, D.Sc., R.D., author of "Omega-3 Fatty Acids and Health." "Fish is a healthful food for people of all ages."

Clear messages resulting from studies such as this encourage people to continue to enjoy fish and seafood as part of a healthy diet. For more information about the study, visit www.ajpm-online.net, for great fish recipes, go to www.aboutseafood.com.