Inside

Nutrition Profiling. Can nutrition symbols help you score healthier food? 2

Diet and Prostate Cancer Update. From selenium to lycopene, learn the latest. 3

A Taste of the Orient. How do tasty Asian convenience foods measure up on the health scale? 5

Fiber Sense—The Scoop on Isolated Fibers: Not all are created equal. 7

The Beauty of Asian Pears. These crisp pears are fiber superstars. 8

Just In

Global Report: One-Third of U.S. Cancers are Preventable

A landmark global report revealed some amazing findings: 45 percent of colon cancer and 38 percent of breast cancer in the U.S. are preventable through diet, physical activity and weight maintenance. Overall, one-third of the most common cancers in the U.S. could be prevented. The report examined how policy change can affect cancer risk. The bottom line? Everyone needs to make health a higher priority. Policy recommendations include:

• Governments should require walking/cycling routes to promote activity.
• The food and drink industry should make public health a priority.
• Schools should encourage physical activity and provide healthy food.
• Health professionals should take the lead in public health information.
• People should use government nutrition labeling information on food packages to make healthier choices.

www.environmentalnutrition.com

The Best Catch of the Day: EN’s Guide to Eco-friendly, Healthy and Safe Fish

There’s a tidal wave of scientific evidence that eating fish regularly is a healthy habit worth adapting. Fish is low in saturated fats and is the main source of the omega-3 fatty acids, eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA). These omega-3 fatty acids have many health benefits, including lowering triglycerides and blood pressure, slowing the buildup of plaque in the arteries, tamping down inflammation, and reducing the risk of death, heart attack, abnormal heart rhythms and stroke in people with heart disease. No wonder the American Heart Association suggests that you eat fish twice a week. And some research findings indicate that the omega-3 fatty acids found in fish may help reduce joint pain, the symptoms of depression, and protect against Alzheimer's disease. Stretching way back in time, eating fish has been an important part of human health—some scientists believe that our early ancestors relied upon fish as a large part of their diet, which may have supported brain growth.

“Seafood has always been a popular food choice—whether in wealthy nations where it’s considered an alternative to beef, pork or chicken, or in poorer nations where it’s often the most available and affordable protein source. More recently, researchers have publicized the specific role of fatty acids found in fish in brain health, neurological health and cardiovascular health, and that has made seafood more popular than ever before,” explains Brian Halwell, Ph.D., senior researcher at the Worldwatch Institute in Washington, D.C. Fish has become so popular that the world’s fish farmers and fishing fleets harvested 132.5 million tons of seafood in 2003 (the latest year data is available), almost seven times the harvest of 1950.

Dangerous Waters. Unfortunately, the fish health story gets a bit more complicated. Today’s headlines highlight mercury contamination in fish and the dwindling supply of the world’s fish populations, prompting people to wonder whether eating fish regularly is such a healthy endeavor after all.

“The world’s major fisheries have been taxed for decades. So concern over the sustainability of our fish supply isn’t new. It’s just that the demands placed on the

(continued on page 4)

The Pleasure Principal—Can You Really Have Your Cake and Eat It, Too?

Eating well has always hinged on balancing three equally important variables: nutrition, convenience and pleasure. However, a couple of decades worth of dire nutrition headlines, scary food recalls and health experts acting as the food police have just about squelched the pleasure principle of eating for many people. For those who do find eating good food to be a pleasurable experience, it can often be accompanied with a fair share of worry and guilt. It’s easy to just throw up your hands and stop listening to nutrition advice altogether, if it means you can’t partake in the joy of eating.

Before you give up on reveling in delicious food, take heart in the growing support for the principle of pleasure, which appears to be a vital part of eating healthfully. After all, there is not much scientific support for the theory that deprivation and despair surrounding food can help you lower disease risk, maintain a healthy weight and improve daily physical and mental health. On the contrary, the Mediterranean Diet, French Paradox (see page 6) and other research initiatives on eating and well-being continue to illustrate that taking pleasure in food is part of the formula for living a healthy, happy life.

(continued on page 6)
The Best Fish Tales: Look for Eco-Safety and Omega-3s

(continued from page 1)

oceans are greater than ever. The timing is doubly bad because climate change, coastal pollution and other challenges make the oceans less resilient and less productive," stresses Halweil. The Worldwatch Institute reports that roughly two-thirds of the world's major stocks have been fished at or beyond their capacity. Another 10 percent have been harvested so heavily that fish populations will take years to recover.

Concerns are also mounting over environmental contaminants showing up in many fish. "Among the major water pollutants that show up in fish and pose a threat to our health, if eaten regularly, is mercury, primarily from atmospheric fallout from coal-fired power plants," says Halweil, who notes that other industrial pollutants, such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), can contaminate fish as well. To top it off, many modern fishing practices, such as bottom trawling, promote further dangers to the water ecosystem and ocean life.

Navigating Your Way through the Fish Market. The good news is that many varieties of fish are harvested with eco-friendly practices, are not endangered, and have low levels of mercury contamination—making them a wonderful source of omega-3 fatty acids in your diet. Halweil offers the most important tip for finding the best fish choices, "Eat low on the food chain. It's the big, long-lived species like tuna, swordfish, Chilean sea bass and sharks that are most endangered and carry the greatest burden of mercury and other pollutants. They are popular and they reproduce more slowly than smaller species lower on the food chain, like shellfish, sardines, anchovies and farm-raised fish like carp, catfish and tilapia." Tilapia, one of the most popular fish in America, contains lower levels of omega-3 fatty acids compared with excellent omega-3 sources like salmon, but it can still make a worthwhile contribution to your omega-3 intake goals.

When you're surveying the choices at the seafood counter in the supermarket, it can be difficult to determine which fish are safest for you and the environment. Some of the best food choices may not always seem logical at first glance. For example, farmed catfish shows up on EN's Top Fish Dos, but farmed salmon is on EN's Top Fish Don'ts. The reason? Some fish are farmed under eco-friendly conditions that reduce exposure to contaminants. Atlantic salmon farms are usually farmed in large-scale, densely stocked netpens that pollute surrounding waters with waste and chemicals.

Take along EN's Fish Guide on your next shopping or dining trip. Organizations like Worldwatch Institute (worldwatch.org), Environmental Defense Fund (edf.org), and Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch (montereybayaquarium.org) have also created handy seafood pocket guides that you can carry with you. The Marine Stewardship Council, which certifies some seafood as "sustainable," has approved use of its label for 18 fisheries worldwide, including North Sea herring and Australian mackerel. Over 370 products in almost 30 nations now carry the council's "Fish Forever" logo. Do your best to protect your health, and the health of future fish supplies, by being choosy when it comes to buying fish.

―Sharon Palmer, R.D.

EN's Fish Guide—Healthier for You, Healthier for the Planet

TOP FISH DOS: Our top fish picks are eco-friendly, a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, and low in mercury.

1. Arctic Char
2. Barramundi, U.S. farmed
3. Catfish, U.S.
4. Clams, farmed
5. Cod, Pacific
6. Crab, Dungeness
7. Mussels
8. Oysters, farmed
9. Pollock, Alaska wild
10. Salmon, Alaska wild
11. Sardines, Pacific, U.S.
12. Scallops, Bay, farmed
13. Shrimp, Pink, Oregon
14. Striped Bass, farmed
15. Tilapia, U.S. farmed
16. Trout, Rainbow, U.S. farmed

TOP FISH DON'TS: The top fish to avoid are guilty of either higher levels of environmental contaminants and/or at least one serious environmental problem such as overfishing or fishing practices that bycatch other sealife like sea turtles and birds.

1. Chilean Sea Bass
2. Cod, Atlantic
3. Crab, King
4. Flounder, Sole, Atlantic
5. Groupers
6. Halibut, Atlantic
7. Lobster, spiny, Caribbean
8. Mahi mahi, imported
9. Orange Roughy
10. Rockfish, Pacific (trawled)
11. Salmon, Atlantic, farmed
12. Sharks
13. Shrimp, imported farmed or wild
14. Swordfish, imported
15. Tilefish (Gulf of Mexico/South Atlantic)
16. Tuna, bigeye/whitefin (imported)
17. Tuna, bluefin
18. Yellowtail, farmed Australia or Japan

Source: Environmental Defense Fund, Seawatch
Note: EN's list does not represent all fish in these categories. Additional recommendations for fish selections can be viewed at EnvironmentalDefenseFund.org.

You Can Help Protect Our Fish Supplies for Years to Come

There's a lot that you can do to protect the world's fish supply and habitats.

1. Eat fish lower on the food chain. These fish tend to have lower levels of toxins and to be less endangered. This means eat fewer big fish like tuna and more small marine creatures like clams and squid.
2. Encourage your community to support ocean-friendly fish. Request that your favorite markets and restaurants carry only eco-friendly fish. Bring in a pocket guide to point out the best fish choices.
3. Get to know your fish supply. Pay attention to where fish comes from and how it's harvested. Avoid fish that are fished using large-scale, indiscriminate techniques, like long-lines or bottom trawling.
4. Support small-scale fishing operations. Smaller boats tend to use less destructive fishing practices.
5. Protect your water supply. Much of the water you use in your home every day goes down the drain and ends up in the ocean. Try to use non-toxic, biodegradable products and don't throw toxins down the drain.
6. Be picky about what you eat. Runoff from large livestock farms and chemicals used in farming end up in the ocean, where it damages sea life. Try to buy organic food and pasture-raised meats that tend to result in less toxic runoff into the oceans.
7. Keep your fish portions petite. Sure, it's good to eat fish, but the suggested serving size is three ounces. Many restaurants serve more than double that portion, resulting in waste and overindulgence. Share your fish meal with a partner.