

# Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory

Ohio EPA Division of Surface Water

July 2016



Ohio

Department of Health  
Department of Natural Resources  
Environmental Protection Agency

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## 2016 Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory

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### Introduction

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This document provides information about fish consumption advisories issued by the Ohio Department of Health for sport fish caught in Ohio waters. The Department of Health, in cooperation with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, issues this advice under Ohio law (Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3701).

Use this document to get important information about whether fish consumption is safe where you fish. If you are an angler, or someone working with an organization concerned with providing advisory information to the public, you are welcome to contact us directly through the contacts listed below.

Ohio Department of Health — (800) 755-4769  
Ohio EPA, Public Interest Center — (614) 644-2160

Email — [fishmail@epa.ohio.gov](mailto:fishmail@epa.ohio.gov)

Write to:  
Ohio EPA  
Division of Surface Water  
Standards and Technical Support Section  
P.O. Box 1049  
Columbus, OH 43216-1049

**Note: Fish consumption advisories are subject to change based on new data.**

# 2016 Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory

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## Overall Advice

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Fish can be part of a healthy, balanced diet. Fish are generally low in fat and high in protein. Fish contain a number of vitamins and minerals, and are the primary food source for long-chain omega-3 fatty acids. Studies suggest that omega-3 fatty acids are important during fetal brain and eye development, and may help to prevent heart disease in adults. Health experts recommend that regular consumption of fish be included as part of a healthy diet.



In general, use the following table to guide your fish consumption choices:

Two meals per week	Yellow perch, sunfish (e.g., bluegill, green, longear, redear)*
One meal per week	All fish not specified in this table
One meal per month	Flathead catfish 23" and over, northern pike 23" and over, steelhead trout from Lake Erie and its tributaries

\*Consumption of these species should be limited to one meal per week from: Ashtabula River, Cuyahoga River, Mahoning River, Nesmith Lake, Ohio Canal, Ohio River and West Branch Reservoir; and as otherwise indicated in the Limit Your Meals from These Waters section of this advisory.

For specific water bodies, check the Limit Your Meals from These Waters section of this advisory. Consumption of Ohio sport fish caught from these water bodies should be limited to one meal per month or one meal every two months, as listed in the Limit Your Meals from These Waters section.

In addition, some species of Ohio sport fish caught at nine locations **should not be eaten at all**. See the Limit Your Meals from These Waters section for the location and species of fish in this advisory.

These advisories protect pregnant women, women of child-bearing age, nursing women, infants and children age 15 and younger.

The general advisories and some of the specific advisories are based on mercury contamination.

### Don't wade or swim at these locations

Another advisory is issued that cautions against skin contact. The waters and/or sediments in these areas have high levels of contaminants. It is recommended that a person not swim or wade in these water body sections. See the Do Not Wade or Swim in These Waters section for the locations in this advisory.

### Statewide/Nationwide Mercury Advisory for Sensitive Populations

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The statewide mercury advisory, issued in 1997, is primarily for women of child-bearing age and children age 15 and under. They are advised to eat no more than one meal per week of fish (any species) from any Ohio body of water, except those listed as safe to eat two meals per week, or no more than the number of meals specified for the more restrictive advisories listed in the Limit Your Meals from These Waters section. Although the one meal per week advice applies mainly to these sensitive populations, the general advisory issued in 2003, recommends that everyone follow that advice.

In 2004, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) jointly issued a national mercury-related advisory for store-bought fish and fish served in restaurants. The following advice is for women who might become pregnant, women who are pregnant, nursing mothers and young children.

- 1) Do not eat shark, swordfish, king mackerel or tilefish because they contain high levels of mercury.
- 2) Eat up to 12 ounces (two average meals) a week of a variety of fish and shellfish that are lower in mercury.
  - Five of the most commonly eaten fish that are low in mercury are shrimp, canned light tuna, salmon, pollock and catfish.
  - Another commonly eaten fish, albacore (white) tuna has more mercury than canned light tuna. So, when choosing your two meals of fish and shellfish, you may eat up to six ounces (one average meal) of albacore tuna per week.
- 3) Check local advisories about the safety of fish caught by family and friends in your local lakes, rivers and coastal areas. If no advice is available, eat up to six ounces (one average meal) per week of fish you catch from local waters, but don't consume any other fish during that week.

### Limit Your Meals from These Waters

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The advisory table beginning on the next page lists water body areas in which one or more species of fish are contaminated.

- Fish with low levels of contaminants are safe to eat, provided the trimming, cooking and meal frequency advice is followed. The maximum recommended frequencies for eating those fish are included in the following table.
- Fish with high levels of contaminants should not be eaten. The maximum recommended frequency for eating those fish is identified in the advisory table as **Do Not Eat**. A table listing only the Do Not Eat fish is available at [epa.ohio.gov/dsw/fishadvisory/index.aspx](http://epa.ohio.gov/dsw/fishadvisory/index.aspx).
- In addition to the water bodies in the advisory table, there is a statewide advisory to eat no more than one meal per week of any sport fish caught from any water body in Ohio, except for those with two meal per week or unrestricted advisories in place.

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### How to Use the Advisory Table

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5
Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	One meal per	Contaminant
Nemo River	U.S. Route 71 to Xeno River	Halibut 20" and over	Two months	Mercury
		Halibut under 20"	Month	Mercury

- In columns 1 and 2, find the body of water and location in which you are fishing.
- In column 3, find the kind of fish you have caught. If a length is noted, measure the fish from the tip of the nose to the end of the tail fin. See pictures of many common Ohio sport fish at <http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/species-and-habitats/species-guide-index>.
- In column 4, find the maximum recommended meal frequency for the size and type of fish. One meal per week (52 meals per year), one meal per month (12 meals per year) and one meal every two months (six meals per year) is advice for how long to wait before eating your next meal of sport fish.
- In column 5, find the contaminant causing the advisory.

**Note:** If your water body of interest is not listed in the table below, please refer back to the table on page 3 of this booklet for consumption advice. Lake Erie walleye are in the one meal a week advice category.

## 2016 Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory

### Advisory Table

Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	One meal per	Contaminant
Acton Lake	All Waters	Channel Catfish	Two meals per week	Mercury
		Bluegill, Common Carp, Saugeye	Unrestricted	
Adams Lake	All Waters (Adams County)	Bluegill Sunfish, Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Ashtabula River	Hilldom Road to U.S. Route 20 (Prospect Road) (Ashtabula County)	Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury
		Smallmouth Bass	Month	PCBs
	U.S. Route 20 (Prospect Road) to mouth (Lake Erie) (Ashtabula County)	Common Carp, Freshwater Drum	Month	PCBs
Auglaize River	U.S. Route 33, Wapakoneta to Maumee River, Defiance (Allen, Auglaize, Defiance, Paulding, Putnam counties)	Freshwater Drum, Smallmouth Bass, Rock Bass	Month	Mercury
Bad Creek	All Waters	Channel Catfish	Two meals per week	Mercury
Berlin Lake	All Waters (Mahoning, Portage, Stark counties)	Channel Catfish	Month	PCBs
		Common Carp	Month	Lead, PCBs
Big Darby Creek	U.S. Route 42 (Plain City) to Alkire Road (Georgesville) (Franklin, Madison, Union counties)	Channel Catfish	Month	Mercury, PCBs
		Channel Catfish	Month	Mercury, PCBs
	Alkire Road (Georgesville) to mouth (Scioto River) (Franklin, Pickaway counties)	Freshwater Drum 20" and over, Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Black Fork Mohican River	State Route 39 (Melco) to mouth (Mohican River) (Ashland, Richland counties)	Common Carp	Month	PCBs
		All waters	Freshwater Drum	Two meals per week
		Channel Catfish	Month	PCBs
		Rock Bass	Month	Mercury
Black River (continued on next page)	Interstate 80 to Homewood Park (Lorain) (Lorain County)	Channel Catfish	Month	PCBs
		Freshwater Drum	Month	Mercury, PCBs
	Homewood Park (Lorain) to Erie St./US Route 6 (Lorain County)	Common Carp, Channel Catfish	Month	PCBs
		Freshwater Drum	Month	Mercury, PCBs

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Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	One meal per	Contaminant
Black River (continued)	Erie St./US Route 6 to mouth (Lake Erie) (Lorain County)	Common Carp	Two months	PCBs
		Channel Catfish	Month	PCBs
		Freshwater Drum	Month	Mercury, PCBs
Bokes Creek	All Waters	Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Buckeye Lake	All Waters (Fairfield, Licking, Perry counties)	Black Crappie, Saugeye	Two meals per week	Mercury
Chagrin River	I-90 to mouth (Lake Erie) (Lake County)	Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Chippewa Lake	All Waters	Common Carp, White Crappie	Two meals per week	Mercury
		Bluegill, Channel Catfish	Unrestricted	
C.J. Brown Reservoir	All Waters (Clark County)	Walleye, Common Carp	Two meals per week	Mercury
Clear Creek	Clearport Road (Clearport) to mouth (Hocking River) (Fairfield, Hocking counties)	Common Carp	Month	Mercury
Clear Fork Reservoir	All Waters (Richland County)	Largemouth Bass	Two meals per week	Mercury
Conneaut Creek	All Waters (Ashtabula County)	Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Cross Creek	Reeds Mill Road to mouth (Ohio River) (Jefferson County)	Channel Catfish	Month	Mercury, PCBs
		Freshwater Drum, Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Cuyahoga River	State Route 87 (Russell Park) to Ohio Edison Dam Pool (Geauga, Portage, Summit counties)	Common Carp	Month	PCBs
		Black Crappie, White Sucker 16" and over	Month	Mercury
	Ohio Edison Dam Pool to mouth (Lake Erie) (Cuyahoga, Summit counties)	Brown Bullhead, Channel Catfish, Common Carp	Month	PCBs
		White Sucker 16" and over	Month	Mercury
Deer Creek	Interstate 70 to mouth (Scioto River) (Fayette, Madison, Pickaway, Ross counties)	Channel Catfish, White Crappie	Two meals per week	Mercury
Deer Creek Lake	All Waters (Fayette, Pickaway counties)	Common Carp, Largemouth Bass, White Crappie	Two meals per week	Mercury
Dicks Creek	Cincinnati-Dayton Road, Middletown to the Great Miami River (Butler County)	All Species	Do Not Eat	PCBs
Dillon Lake	All Waters (Muskingum County)	Common Carp, Largemouth Bass	Two meals per week	Mercury

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Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	One meal per	Contaminant
Dow Lake	All Waters (Athens County)	Channel Catfish, Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Duck Creek	Township Road 329 (Stanleyville) to State Route 26 (Norwood) (Washington County)	Common Carp, Sauger	Month	Total DDT
	State Route 26 (Norwood) to mouth (Ohio River) (Washington County)	Common Carp, Sauger  Black Crappie, Freshwater Drum, Saugeye 16" and over	Month  Month	Total DDT  Mercury
East Branch Black River	Richman Road (Lodi) to mouth (Black River) (Lorain, Medina counties)	Common Carp 23" and over, Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Yellow Bullhead	Month	Mercury
East Branch Rocky River	State Route 3 (North Royalton) to mouth (Rocky River) (Cuyahoga County)	Rock Bass	Month	Mercury
East Fork Lake (Harsha Lake)	All Waters (Clermont County)	Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury
East Fork Little Miami River	All Waters (Brown, Clermont, Clinton, Hamilton, Highland counties)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Flathead Catfish, Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Spotted Bass	Month	Mercury
Eastwood Lake	All Waters (Montgomery County)	Common Carp	Month	PCBs
Fish Creek	All Waters (Williams County)	Rock Bass	Month	Mercury
Findley Reservoir #2	All Waters	Walleye, White Bass	Unrestricted	
Ford (a.k.a. Hamilton) Hydraulic Canal	All Waters (Butler County)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	Month	PCBs
Forked Run Lake	All Waters (Meigs County)	Common Carp, Largemouth Bass, White Crappie	Month	Mercury
Four Mile Creek	Acton Lake to Sevenmile Creek (Butler County)	Smallmouth Bass 17" and over	Month	Mercury
Grand Lake St. Marys	All Waters (Auglaize, Mercer counties)	Largemouth Bass	Two meals per week	Mercury
Grand River (continued on next page)	Lake Estabrook (Parkman) to Sweitzer Road (Camp Yakewi) (Ashtabula, Geauga, Trumbull counties)	Common Carp 22" and over	Month	PCBs
		Freshwater Drum, Largemouth Bass, Rock Bass, Silver Redhorse, Smallmouth Bass, Walleye, Yellow Bullhead	Month	Mercury

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Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	One meal per	Contaminant		
Grand River (continued)	Sweitzer Road (Camp Yakewi) to State Route 2 (Painesville) (Ashtabula, Lake counties)	Common Carp 22" and over, Rainbow Trout	Month	PCBs		
		Freshwater Drum, Largemouth Bass, Rock Bass, Silver Redhorse, Smallmouth Bass, Walleye, Yellow Bullhead	Month	Mercury		
	State Route 2 (Painesville) to mouth (Lake Erie) (Lake County)	Common Carp 18" and over, Rainbow Trout	Month	PCBs		
		Freshwater Drum, Largemouth Bass, Silver Redhorse, Smallmouth Bass, Yellow Bullhead	Month	Mercury		
		Great Miami River (continued on next page)	Downstream of Indian Lake to Lowhead Dam at Monument Avenue (Dayton) (Logan, Miami, Montgomery, Shelby counties)	Common Carp, Channel Catfish, Flathead Catfish	Month	PCBs
				Largemouth Bass, Saugeye, Smallmouth Bass, White Bass	Month	Mercury
Lowhead Dam at Monument Avenue (Dayton) to State Route 73 near Middletown (Butler, Montgomery, Warren counties)	All Suckers		Do Not Eat	PCBs		
	Flathead Catfish		Month	PCBs, Mercury		
	Common Carp, Channel Catfish		Month	PCBs		
	Largemouth Bass, Saugeye, Smallmouth Bass, White Bass		Month	Mercury		
State Route 73 near Middletown to Harrison Pike (Miami town) (Butler, Hamilton, Warren counties)	All Suckers	Do Not Eat	PCBs			
	Striped Bass Hybrid	Two months	*PCBs, Lead			
	Flathead Catfish	Month	PCBs, Mercury			
	Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Freshwater Drum, Smallmouth Buffalo	Month	PCBs			
	Largemouth Bass, Saugeye, Smallmouth Bass, White Bass	Month	Mercury			

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Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	One meal per	Contaminant	
Great Miami River (continued)	Harrison Pike (Miami town) to mouth (Ohio River) (Hamilton County)	All Suckers	Do Not Eat	PCBs	
		Striped Bass Hybrid	Two months	*PCBs, Lead	
		Flathead Catfish	Month	PCBs, Mercury	
		Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Smallmouth Buffalo	Month	PCBs	
		Freshwater Drum 16" and over, Largemouth Bass, Saugeye, White Bass	Month	Mercury	
Greenville Creek	All Waters (Darke, Miami counties)	Largemouth Bass, Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury	
Griggs Reservoir	All Waters (Franklin County)	Common Carp	Two meals per week	Mercury	
Hamilton Hydraulic Canal	See Ford Hydraulic Canal (Butler County)				
Highlandtown Lake	All Waters (Columbiana County)	Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury	
Hocking River	Rock Mill Road (Rock Mill) to State Route 33 (The Plains) (Athens, Fairfield, Hocking counties)	Common Carp	Month	PCBs	
		State Route 33 (The Plains) to U.S. Route 50/State Route 32 (Athens) (Athens, Hocking counties)	Common Carp, Freshwater Drum	Month	PCBs
		Walleye	Month	Mercury	
		U.S. Route 50/State Route 32 (Athens) to mouth (Ohio River) (Athens County)	Common Carp, Freshwater Drum	Month	PCBs
Huron River	All Waters (Erie, Huron counties)	Common Carp, Smallmouth Buffalo	Month	PCBs	
		Spotted Bass	Month	Lead	
Indian Lake	All Waters (Logan County)	Black Crappie, Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Largemouth Bass	Two meals per week	Mercury	
Jefferson Lake	All Waters (Jefferson County)	Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury	
Killdeer Pond #30	All Waters (Wyandot County)	Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury	
Kiser Lake	All Waters (Champaign County)	Largemouth Bass	Two meals per week	Mercury	
		Bluegill	Unrestricted		
Knox Lake	All Waters	Common Carp, White Crappie	Two meals per week	Mercury	
		Channel Catfish	Unrestricted		

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Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	One meal per	Contaminant
Kokosing River	County Road 13/Green Valley Road (Mount Vernon) to mouth (Walhonding River) (Coshocton, Knox counties)	Rock Bass 8" and over, Smallmouth Bass 15" and over	Month	Mercury
LaDue Reservoir	All Waters (Geauga County)	Brown Bullhead, Largemouth Bass	Two meals per week	Mercury
Lake Erie	All Waters (Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Erie, Lake, Lorain, Lucas, Ottawa, Sandusky counties)	Common Carp 27" and over	Two months	PCBs
		Smallmouth Bass	Month	PCBs and Mercury
		Channel Catfish, Common Carp under 27", Freshwater Drum, Lake Trout, Steelhead Trout, White Bass, Whitefish 19" and over, White Perch	Month	PCBs
		Brown Bullhead	Month	Mercury
Lake Erie Tributaries	All Waters (Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Erie, Lake, Lorain, Lucas, Ottawa, Sandusky counties)	Steelhead Trout	Month	PCBs
Lake Hope	All Waters (Vinton County)	Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Lake La Su An	All Waters (Williams County)	Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Lake Lavere	All Waters (Williams County)	Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Lake Logan	All Waters	Common Carp, White Crappie	Two meals per week	Mercury
		Bluegill, Channel Catfish, Saugeye	Unrestricted	
Lake Milton	All Waters (Mahoning County)	Common Carp	Month	PCBs
Lake Nesmith	All Waters (Summit County)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	Do Not Eat	PCBs
Lake Sue	All Waters (Williams County)	Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Lake White	All Waters	Common Carp	Two meals per week	
Licking River	Adjacent Summit Street (Newark) to mouth (Muskingum River) (Licking, Muskingum counties)	Channel Catfish	Month	PCBs
Little Beaver Creek	Upstream of Bell School Road (Williamsport) to Pennsylvania State Line (near Grimms Bridge Road) (Columbiana County)	Channel Catfish	Two months	PCBs
		Common Carp, Sauger	Month	PCBs
		Smallmouth Bass 12" and over	Month	Mercury

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Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	One meal per	Contaminant
Little Miami River	Lower Bellbrook Road (Bellbrook) to mouth (Ohio River) (Clermont, Greene, Hamilton, Warren counties)	Common Carp 24" and over, Freshwater Drum 16" and over, Sauger, Silver Redhorse, Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Little Muskingum River	Hill's Covered Bridge to mouth (Ohio River) (Washington County)	Freshwater Drum	Month	Mercury, PCBs
		Spotted Bass, Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Little Scioto River	State Route 739, near Marion to Holland Road, near Marion (Marion County)	All Species	Do Not Eat	PAHs
Little Scioto River (Southeast Ohio River tributary)	Millstone Road to mouth (Scioto River) (Scioto County)	Channel Catfish	Month	PCBs, Mercury
		Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Spotted Bass	Month	Mercury
Mad River	U.S. Route 36 (Urbana) to mouth (Great Miami River) (Champaign, Clark, Greene, Montgomery counties)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	Month	PCBs
		Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Mahoning River	Rockhill Avenue NE (Alliance) to Pennsylvania State Line (Mahoning, Portage, Stark, Trumbull counties)	Channel Catfish	Two months	PCBs
		Smallmouth Bass, Walleye	Month	*Mercury, PCBs
		Northern Pike, Rock Bass, Bluegill, Common Carp	Month	PCBs
		Yellow Perch	Week	PCBs
Maumee River (continued on next page)	Indiana State Line to Defiance (Defiance, Paulding counties)	Freshwater Drum, Smallmouth Bass, Smallmouth Buffalo, Common Carp, Flathead Catfish	Month	Mercury, PCBs
		Channel Catfish	Month	PCBs
	Defiance to Perrysburg (Defiance, Henry, Lucas, Wood counties)	Freshwater Drum, Smallmouth Bass, Smallmouth Buffalo, Common Carp, Flathead Catfish	Month	Mercury, PCBs
		Channel Catfish	Two months	PCBs
Perrysburg to Interstate 75 (Lucas, Wood counties)		Freshwater Drum, Smallmouth Bass, Smallmouth Buffalo, Common Carp, Flathead Catfish	Month	Mercury, PCBs

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Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	One meal per	Contaminant
Maumee River (continued)	Interstate 75 to mouth (Lake Erie) (Lucas County)	Channel Catfish	Two months	PCBs
		Smallmouth Bass	Month	PCBs
		Freshwater Drum, Smallmouth Buffalo, Common Carp, Flathead Catfish	Month	Mercury, PCBs
Meadowbrook Lake	Perrysburg to mouth (Lake Erie) (Lucas, Wood counties)	Channel Catfish	Two months	PCBs
Middle Fork Little Beaver Creek <sup>^</sup>	Allen Road (Salem) to State Route 14 (Millville) (Columbiana, Mahoning counties)	Freshwater Drum, Smallmouth Bass, Smallmouth Buffalo, Common Carp, Flathead Catfish	Month	Mercury, PCBs
		Sauger	Month	PCBs
		Freshwater Drum	Month	Mercury
	State Route 14 (Millville) to mouth (Little Beaver Creek) (Columbiana County)	Common Carp, Sauger	Month	PCBs
		Freshwater Drum	Month	Mercury
Mill Creek (Ashtabula)	South Denmark Road (Jefferson) to mouth (Grand River) (Ashtabula County)	Largemouth Bass, Rock Bass	Month	Mercury
Mill Creek (Cincinnati)	Interstate 275 to the Ohio River (Hamilton County)	Striped Bass Hybrid	Month	PCBs
Mill Creek (Marysville)	State Route 36 to mouth (Scioto River)	Saugeye	Two meals per week	Mercury
		Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Mohican River	County Highway 23 (Spellacy) to mouth (Walhonding River) (Coshocton, Holmes, Knox counties)	Common Carp	Month	PCBs
		Rock Bass	Month	Mercury
Mosquito Creek	All Waters (Trumbull County)	Northern Pike	Month	Mercury
		Common Carp	Month	PCBs
		Bluegill	Week	PCBs, lead
Muskingum River (continued on next page)	Zanesville Dam (Zanesville) to mouth (Ohio River) (Morgan, Muskingum, Washington counties)	Smallmouth Buffalo 24" and over	Two months	PCBs
		Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Smallmouth Buffalo under 24", White Bass	Month	PCBs
		Flathead Catfish 24" and over, Saugeye, Striped Bass Hybrid	Month	Mercury, PCBs

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Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	One meal per	Contaminant
Muskingum River (continued)	Zanesville Dam (Zanesville) to mouth (Ohio River) (Morgan, Muskingum, Washington counties)	Freshwater Drum, Spotted Bass	Month	Mercury
New Lyme Lake	All Waters (Ashtabula County)	Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Nimishillen Creek	All Waters (Stark, Summit, Tuscarawas counties)	Common Carp	Month	PCBs
		Green Sunfish	Unrestricted	
North Branch Portage River	All Waters (Wood County)	Common Carp	Month	PCBs
North Turkeyfoot Creek	All Waters	Channel Catfish	Two meals per week	Mercury
		Common Carp	Unrestricted	
Ohio Brush Creek	State Route 73 (Louden) to mouth (Ohio River) (Adams County)	Spotted Bass	Month	Mercury
Ohio Canal	See Portage Canal (Summit County)			
Ohio River	Pennsylvania Border (East Liverpool) to Belleville Lock (Athens, Belmont, Columbiana, Jefferson, Meigs, Monroe, Washington counties)	Channel Catfish 18" and over	Do Not Eat	PCBs
		Channel Catfish under 18", Common Carp, Striped Bass Hybrid, White Bass	Two months	PCBs
		Black Crappie, Flathead Catfish, Freshwater Drum, Largemouth Bass, Sauger, Saugeye, Smallmouth Bass, Smallmouth Buffalo, Spotted Bass, All Suckers, Walleye	Month	PCBs
	Belleville Lock to Indiana Border (Adams, Brown, Clermont, Gallia, Hamilton, Lawrence, Meigs, Scioto counties)	Channel Catfish 18" and over	Two months	PCBs
		Channel Catfish under 18", Common Carp, Flathead Catfish, Freshwater Drum, Striped Bass, Striped Bass Hybrid, All Suckers, White Bass	Month	PCBs
		Largemouth Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Spotted Bass	Month	Mercury
Olentangy River	State Route 95 (Claridon) to mouth (Scioto River) (Delaware, Franklin, Marion counties)	Smallmouth Bass 12" and over	Month	Mercury

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Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	One meal per	Contaminant
O'Shaughnessy Reservoir	All Waters (Delaware County)	Common Carp, White Crappie	Two meals per week	Mercury
Ottawa River (Lima)	Cool Road (Allen County) to mouth (Auglaize River) (Allen, Putnam counties)	Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Ottawa River (Toledo)	Main Street in Sylvania to Secor Road at University of Toledo (Lucas County)	Common Carp	Month	PCBs
	Secor Road at University of Toledo to Auburn Avenue (Lucas County)	Common Carp	Do Not Eat	PCBs
	Auburn Avenue to mouth (Lake Erie) (Lucas County)	All Species	Do Not Eat	PCBs
Paint Creek	Thomas Road near Florence to near Plyley's Lane at Belleview Avenue (Belleview Heights) (Fayette, Highland, Madison, Ross counties)	Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury
	Near Plyley's Lane at Belleview Avenue (Belleview Heights) to mouth (Scioto River) (Ross County)	Common Carp	Month	PCBs
		Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Paint Creek Lake	All Waters (Highland County)	Saugeye	Two meals per week	Mercury
		Bluegill	Unrestricted	
Piedmont Lake	All Waters	Common Carp, Largemouth Bass	Two meals per week	Mercury
		Bluegill	Unrestricted	Mercury
Pike Lake	All Waters (Pike County)	Channel Catfish	Two meals per week	Mercury
Pine Creek	Monroe Road to mouth (Ohio River) (Lawrence, Scioto counties)	Sauger, Spotted Bass	Month	Mercury
Portage Canal (a.k.a. Ohio Canal)	All Waters (Summit County)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	Do Not Eat	PCBs
Portage River	Ohio Turnpike to Lake Erie (Ottawa County)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	Two months	PCBs
Punderson Lake	All Waters (Geauga County)	Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Pymatuning Reservoir	All Waters (Ashtabula County)	Largemouth Bass	Two meals per week	Mercury
Rocky Fork Licking River	Jobes Road near Davis Farm Bridge to mouth (Licking River) (Licking County)	Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Rocky Fork Little Scioto River	Kendall Road (Minford) to mouth (Little Scioto River) (Scioto County)	Spotted Bass	Month	Mercury

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Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	One meal per	Contaminant
Rocky Fork Mohican River	I-71 to mouth (Black Fork Mohican River) (Richland County)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	Month	PCBs
Rush Run Lake	All Waters (Preble County)	Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Salt Creek	State Route 56 near Election Road (Haynes) to mouth (Scioto River) (Hocking, Ross, Vinton, counties)	Channel Catfish 18" and over, Sauger, Smallmouth Bass, Spotted Bass	Month	Mercury
		Flathead Catfish	Month	Mercury, PCBs
Salt Fork Reservoir	All Waters (Guernsey County)	Bluegill	Unrestricted	
Salt Lick Creek	North High Street (Jackson) to County Road 216 (Springer Road) (Jackson, Ross counties)	Spotted Bass	Month	Mercury
Sandusky River	Rice Road, south of the Ballville Dam, to Lake Erie	Common Carp, Smallmouth Buffalo	Month	PCBs
	State Route 598 (Middletown) to mouth (Lake Erie) (Crawford, Sandusky, Seneca, Wyandot counties)	Channel Catfish 16" and over, Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Sandy Creek	Stump Road (Minerva) to mouth (Tuscarawas River) (Carroll, Columbiana, Stark, Tuscarawas counties)	Common Carp, Rock Bass	Month	PCBs
		Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury, PCBs
Schoonover Lake	All Waters (Allen County)	Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Scioto River (continued on next page)	U.S. Route 68 (Kenton) to Ostrander Road (Warrensburg) (Delaware, Hardin, Marion counties)	Northern Pike, Saugeye 19" and over, Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury
		Flathead Catfish 21" and over	Month	PCBs
	Ostrander Road (Warrensburg) to Greenlawn Dam (Columbus) (Delaware, Franklin, Pickaway counties)	Saugeye 19" and over	Month	Mercury
		Flathead Catfish	Month	Mercury, PCBs
	Greenlawn Dam (Columbus) to U.S. Route 35 (Chillicothe) (Pickaway, Ross counties)	Saugeye 19" and over, White Bass 12" and over	Month	Mercury
		Flathead Catfish	Month	PCBs, Mercury
		Channel Catfish, Common Carp	Month	PCBs
	U.S. Route 35 (Chillicothe) to State Route 335 (Omega) (Pike, Ross counties)	White Bass 12" and over	Month	Mercury
Flathead Catfish		Month	PCBs, Mercury	
Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Smallmouth Buffalo		Month	PCBs	

## 2016 Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory

Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	One meal per	Contaminant
Scioto River (continued)	State Route 335 (Omega) to mouth (Ohio River) (Pike, Scioto counties)	White Bass 12" and over	Month	Mercury
		Flathead Catfish	Month	PCBs, Mercury
		Channel Catfish, Common Carp	Month	PCBs
Sevenmile Creek	U.S. Route 35 (Eaton) to mouth (Four Mile Creek) (Butler County)	Rock Bass	Month	Mercury
Shade River	All Waters	Freshwater Drum	Month	Mercury
Sippo Lake	All Waters	Black Crappie, Bluegill, Common Carp, Largemouth Bass	Unrestricted	
South Branch Portage River	Defiance Pike to mouth (Portage River) (Wood County)	Common Carp	Month	PCBs
South Turkeyfoot Creek	All Waters	Yellow Bullhead	Two meals per week	Mercury
St. Joseph Lake	All Waters (Perry County)	Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury
St. Joseph River	All Waters (Defiance, Williams counties)	Channel Catfish	Month	*Mercury, PCBs
		Rock Bass, Northern Pike	Month	Mercury
St. Marys River	All Waters (Auglaize, Mercer, Van Wert counties)	Freshwater Drum, Largemouth Bass Northern Pike, Saugeye	Month	Mercury
Stillwater Creek	Piedmont Lake to State Route 800 (Tuscarawas, Harrison, Belmont counties)	Northern Pike, Saugeye	Month	Mercury
Stillwater River	Tobin Road (Cosmos) to State Route 121 (Needmore) (Darke County)	Channel Catfish, Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury
	State Route 121 (Needmore) to State Route 718 (Pleasant Hill) (Darke, Miami counties)	Channel Catfish, Rock Bass 8" and over, Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury
	State Route 718 (Pleasant Hill) to Turner Shoup Mill Road (Dayton) (Miami, Montgomery counties)	Channel Catfish, Largemouth Bass 13" and over, Rock Bass 8" and over, Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury
	Turner Shoup Mill Road (Dayton) to mouth (Great Miami River) (Montgomery County)	Channel Catfish, Largemouth Bass 13" and over, Rock Bass 8" and over, Smallmouth Bass, White Crappie	Month	Mercury
Summit Lake	All Waters (Summit County)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	Do Not Eat	PCBs

## 2016 Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory

Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	One meal per	Contaminant	
Swan Creek	Weckerley Road (Whitehouse) to mouth (Lake Erie) (Lucas County)	Common Carp	Month	Mercury, PCBs	
		Northern Pike, Freshwater Drum, Rock Bass	Month	Mercury	
Symmes Creek	State Route 141, Waterloo to Ohio River (Gallia, Lawrence counties)	Freshwater Drum, Sauger	Month	Mercury	
Tiffin River	All Waters (Defiance, Fulton, Williams counties)	Channel Catfish 20" and greater, Common Carp, Flathead Catfish, Freshwater Drum, Northern Pike 25" and greater, Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury	
Toussaint Creek	U.S. 23 to mouth (Lake Erie) (Ottawa, Sandusky counties)	Common Carp	Month	PCBs	
Turkey Creek Lake	All Waters (Scioto County)	Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury	
Tuscarawas River <sup>#</sup> (continued on next page)	Arlington Road (Akron) to State Route 619 (Barberton) (Summit County)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	Two months	PCBs	
		Channel Catfish, Common Carp	Two months	PCBs	
		Smallmouth Bass, Yellow Bullhead	Month	PCBs	
	Northern Pike 25" and over	Month	Mercury		
		Butterbridge Road (Crystal Springs) to State Route 416 (New Philadelphia) (Stark, Tuscarawas counties)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	Two months	PCBs
			Rock Bass 9" and over, Smallmouth Bass, Yellow Bullhead	Month	PCBs
	Northern Pike 25" and over		Month	Mercury	
	State Route 416 (New Philadelphia) to Township Road 204 (Tuscarawas) (Tuscarawas County)	Flathead Catfish 26" and over	Do Not Eat	PCBs	
		Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Flathead Catfish under 26"	Two months	PCBs	
		Walleye	Month	Mercury, PCBs	

## 2016 Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory

Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	One meal per	Contaminant
Tuscarawas River <sup>#</sup> (continued)	Township Road 204 (Tuscarawas) to State Route 751 (Orange) (Coshocton, Tuscarawas counties)	Flathead Catfish 26" and over	Do Not Eat	PCBs
		Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Flathead Catfish under 26"	Two months	PCBs
		Freshwater Drum, Walleye	Month	Mercury, PCBs
	State Route 751 (Orange) to mouth (Muskingum River) (Coshocton County)	Flathead Catfish 26" and over	Do Not Eat	PCBs
		Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Flathead Catfish under 26"	Two months	PCBs
		Freshwater Drum	Month	Mercury, PCBs
Twin Creek	U.S. Route 40 (Lewisburg) to mouth (Great Miami River) (Montgomery, Preble, Warren counties)	Smallmouth Bass 13" and over	Month	Mercury
Tymochtee Creek	State Route 37 (Marseilles) to mouth (Sandusky River) (Wyandot County)	Channel Catfish	Month	Mercury
Vermilion River	All Waters (Erie, Huron, Lorain, Richland counties)	Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Veteran's Memorial Reservoir	All Waters (Hancock County)	White Crappie	Two meals per week	Mercury
		Common Carp	Month	Mercury
Wakatomika Creek	All Waters (Coshocton, Knox, Licking, Muskingum counties)	Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Walborn Reservoir	All Waters (Portage, Stark counties)	Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Walhonding River	All Waters (Coshocton County)	Channel Catfish	Month	PCBs
		Freshwater Drum	Month	Mercury
Walnut Creek (Scioto River tributary)	All Waters (Fairfield, Franklin, Pickaway counties)	Channel Catfish	Month	PCBs
		Smallmouth Bass 14" and larger	Month	Mercury
West Branch Black River	Parsons Road to mouth (Black River) (Lorain County)	White Sucker, Common Carp, Rock Bass	Month	Mercury
West Branch Reservoir (Michael J. Kirwan Reservoir)	All Waters (Portage County)	Largemouth Bass	Month	Mercury
West Branch Rocky River	All Waters (Cuyahoga, Medina counties)	Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury
Wheeling Creek	State Route 9 (Fairpoint) to mouth (Ohio River) (Belmont County)	Smallmouth Bass	Month	Mercury

## 2016 Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory

Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	One meal per	Contaminant
Whitewater River	Indiana State Line to mouth (Great Miami River) (Hamilton County)	Freshwater Drum, Sauger	Month	Mercury
		White Bass	Month	PCBs
Wills Creek	All Waters (Muskingum and Coshocton counties)	Saugeye	Month	Mercury
Wills Creek Reservoir	All Waters (Muskingum County)	Channel Catfish	Two meals per week	Mercury
Wolf Creek	Gettysburg Road to mouth (Great Miami River) (Montgomery County)	Common Carp	Month	PCBs
Yellow Creek	State Park Mooretown Road (Bravo) to mouth (Ohio River) (Jefferson County)	Freshwater Drum	Month	Mercury

\* Chemical that drives the advisory.

# The Tuscarawas River had a one meal per month fish advisory due to hexachlorobenzene through 2005. Data collected in 2004 indicate that, although some hexachlorobenzene is still found in fish from the Tuscarawas River, the levels are not a threat to human health if one meal per week or less is consumed.

^ The Middle Fork Little Beaver Creek had a Do Not Eat fish advisory due to mirex through 2006. Data collected from 1998 through 2004 indicate that, although some mirex is still found in fish in the Middle Fork Little Beaver Creek, the levels are no longer high enough to require a no consumption advisory. All fish in Middle Fork Little Beaver Creek should be consumed no more than once a week, as some species still contain mirex.

PAHs = Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons

PCBs = Polychlorinated Biphenyls

## Do Not Wade or Swim in These Waters

The waters and/or sediments in these areas have high levels of contaminants. It is recommended that a person not swim or wade in these water body sections.

Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Contaminant
Dicks Creek	River mile 4.1 (1 mile downstream from North Branch Dicks Creek), Middletown to the Great Miami River (Butler County)	PCBs
Little Scioto River	State Route 739, near Marion to Holland Road, near Marion (Marion County)	PAHs
Mahoning River	NW Bridge Road (Warren) to Pennsylvania State Line (Mahoning, Trumbull counties)	PAHs, PCBs
Ottawa River, Toledo	Interstate 475 near Auburn Avenue, Toledo to Maumee Bay, Lake Erie (Lucas County)	PCBs

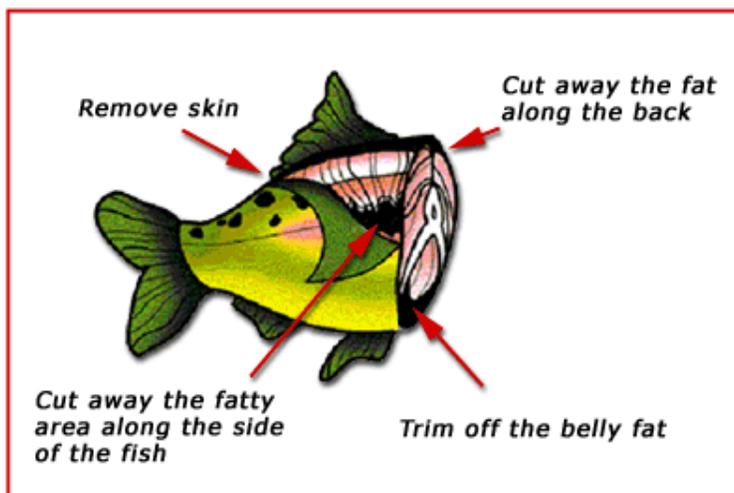
PAHs = Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons

PCBs = Polychlorinated Biphenyls

### Trimming and Cooking Fish

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- Fillet the fish.
- Remove all skin from fillets or steaks. This allows fat to drain away from the fish during cooking.
- Trim off the fatty areas that are shown in black on the drawing. These include the fatty areas found along the belly, back, and both sides of the fillet.
- Cook so that the fat drips away. Broil, bake, or grill on a rack, or poach and discard the liquid.
- If you deep-fry your catch, discard the oil. Pan frying removes few, if any, contaminants.
- If you prepare soups or chowders from fish, be aware that this cooking method holds in juices that contain fat (and contaminants) from the fish. If you are preparing a soup or chowder, you can reduce the amount of contaminants by baking, broiling, grilling or poaching your fish first, then adding the cooked fish to the soup or chowder.



### Common Ohio Sport Fish

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Go to <http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/species-and-habitats/species-guide-index> for pictures of common Ohio sport fish, including:

Black crappie  
Bluegill sunfish  
Channel catfish  
Common carp  
Flathead catfish  
Freshwater drum  
Lake trout  
Largemouth bass  
Longear sunfish

Muskellunge  
Northern pike  
Rock bass  
Sauger  
Saugeye  
Smallmouth bass  
Spotted bass  
Steelhead (Rainbow) trout

Striped bass hybrid  
Walleye  
White bass  
White crappie  
White perch  
White sucker  
Yellow bullhead  
Yellow perch

### Questions and Answers

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#### Why are fish consumption advisories needed?

While most Ohio sport fish are safe to eat, low levels of chemicals like polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and mercury have been found in some fish from certain waters. To ensure the continued good health of Ohioans, the Ohio Department of Health offers an advisory for how often these fish can be safely eaten. An advisory is advice, and should not be viewed as law or regulation. It is intended to help anglers and their families make educated choices about: where you fish, what types of fish you eat, how to determine the amount and frequency of fish you consume and how you prepare fish for cooking.

By following these advisories, you can get the health benefits of eating fish and reduce unwanted contaminants.

#### What is the meal portion or serving size used in these advisories?

For an adult, the serving size is eight ounces uncooked or six ounces cooked. For children under age six, the serving size is three ounces uncooked or two ounces cooked.

#### What about fish from the grocery or restaurants?

This advisory covers only sport fish caught and consumed by Ohio anglers. Safety regulations and advisories for fish in the market place are the responsibility of the Federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Most kinds of fish on the market are safe and numerous health organizations encourage consumption of up to 12 ounces of fish per week. Based upon national advisory information issued by FDA, the following species of fish could pose health problems for some individuals. Avoid these kinds of fish if you are concerned about your exposure to chemical contaminants:

- Shark
- Swordfish
- King mackerel
- Tilefish

U.S. EPA and FDA have issued an advisory for women who might become pregnant, women who are pregnant, nursing mothers and young children. U.S. EPA and FDA recommend that women of childbearing age and children limit their intake of fish, including store bought fish and tuna, to two to three meals per week (12 oz. of fish per week for an adult woman). For more information about FDA's fish consumption advice, see [www.fda.gov/food/foodborneillnesscontaminants/metals/ucm351781.htm](http://www.fda.gov/food/foodborneillnesscontaminants/metals/ucm351781.htm).

#### What about fast food fish sandwiches and fish sticks?

These are usually made from fish low in contaminants.

#### What contaminants are looked for to determine if a fish advisory is needed?

Ohio's fish samples are analyzed for several contaminants, most importantly mercury and PCBs, as those two contaminants are found most often in fish at levels of concern. Several metals including arsenic, cadmium, lead, and selenium are looked for in addition to mercury. Samples are also analyzed for pesticides, including aldrin, dieldrin, lindane, DDT and its breakdown products, endrin, endosulfan, heptachlor, methoxychlor, hexachlorobenzene, mirex and nonachlor. Except in a few special cases on the advisory list, mercury and PCBs are responsible for advisories on Ohio sport fish.

## 2016 Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory

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### **If I eat a fish that is listed at a recommended consumption frequency of one meal per month for mercury, can I also eat a fish that is listed at a recommended consumption frequency of one meal per month for PCBs?**

Yes. Because PCBs and mercury affect different body processes, it is considered safe to eat a fish that has an advisory due to mercury and another fish that has an advisory due to PCBs, even if they have the same meal frequency suggested. However, if you eat any fish that has an advisory due to a particular contaminant, you should not eat another fish within the advised length of time that is listed for that contaminant, regardless of the species or location. For example, if you eat a fish that has a one per month recommended frequency for mercury, you should not eat another sport caught fish that is listed as one per month for mercury, even if the other fish is a different species caught at a different place.

### **What if I eat more than the recommended amount of fish and shellfish in a week?**

One week's consumption of fish does not change the level of contaminants in the body much at all. If you eat a lot of fish one week, you can cut back for the next week or two. Just make sure you average the recommended amount per week.

### **Why does Ohio have a general advisory to limit meals of sport fish?**

Fish taken from rivers, streams, lakes and reservoirs throughout Ohio often have small amounts of chemical contaminants. Limiting the number of sport fish meals eaten ensures that the contaminants do not build up in your body to levels that may be harmful. Data collected from lakes and rivers in Ohio show that a statewide advisory of one meal per week of most sport-caught fish is appropriate.

### **Has the lake where I like to fish been sampled for contaminated fish?**

All lakes that have fish with higher levels of contaminants are listed in the main advisory table. If you don't see the public lake where you fish in the main table, then you may safely consume the fish you catch from the lake according to the general advisory. A complete list of lakes that have been sampled for contaminated fish can be viewed on Ohio EPA's fish consumption advisory webpage or by contacting Ohio EPA.

### **The lake where I fish seems dirty, but the fish have been sampled and there is no advisory. How can the lake seem dirty but the fish not have an advisory?**

Ohio EPA evaluates 36 fish tissue contaminants to decide whether or not to issue a fish consumption advisory. You cannot see, smell or taste these fish contaminants at levels that can affect your health. Therefore, a lake can look dirty, yet the fish in it can be uncontaminated. Conversely, a lake can look clean and the fish can be contaminated and require an advisory. Some things that cause a lake to seem dirty, such as sediment that makes the water look muddy, or bacteria and algae (microscopic plants) that can produce an odor, do not contaminate fish tissue. Therefore, you cannot tell if there should be a fish advisory by whether the lake looks or smells dirty.

### **What health benefits do I get from eating sport fish?**

Fish can be part of a healthy, balanced diet. Fish are generally low in fat and high in protein. Fish contain a number of vitamins and minerals, and are the primary food source of omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3 fatty acids are important during fetal brain and eye development. Omega-3 fatty acids also help to prevent heart disease in adults. For the American Heart Association's recommendation on eating fish, please visit [heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHealthy/NutritionCenter/HealthyDietGoals/Fish-and-Omega-3-Fatty-Acids\\_UCM\\_303248\\_Article.jsp](http://heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHealthy/NutritionCenter/HealthyDietGoals/Fish-and-Omega-3-Fatty-Acids_UCM_303248_Article.jsp).

## 2016 Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory

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### Should I stop eating fish?

We are NOT recommending that you stop eating sport fish, except where **Do not eat** is shown in the advisory. Eating fish regularly offers several health benefits. You will gain those benefits if you follow this fish advisory information carefully to choose safer places to fish; pick safer species to eat; trim and cook your catch correctly; and follow the recommended meal frequency. At the same time you will reduce your exposure to possible contaminants.

### What about eating tuna fish?

U.S. EPA and FDA have issued an advisory for women of child-bearing age and children. The FDA recommends that women of child-bearing age and children limit their intake of fish, including store bought fish and canned tuna, to two average meals per week (12 ounces of fish per week for an adult woman). Albacore (white) tuna has more mercury than canned light tuna. So, when choosing two meals of fish and shellfish, you may eat up to six ounces (one average meal) of albacore tuna per week. Because tuna steak generally contains higher levels of mercury than canned light tuna, when choosing two meals of fish and shellfish, you may eat up to six ounces (one average meal) of tuna steak per week. For more information about FDA's fish consumption advice, including information about tuna consumption, see [www.fda.gov/food/foodborneillnesscontaminants/metals/ucm351781.htm](http://www.fda.gov/food/foodborneillnesscontaminants/metals/ucm351781.htm).

### What contaminants are in fish?

Contaminants that are found in some Ohio fish include PCBs, pesticides and metals such as lead and methyl mercury. The contaminants responsible for most advisories are methyl mercury and PCBs.

### What is methyl mercury?

Mercury is a metal that occurs in nature. It does not break down, but cycles between land, air and water. Mercury may be released to the atmosphere by active volcanoes, coal-burning power plants and burning of industrial or household wastes. Bacteria in sediments convert mercury to methyl mercury, an organic compound. Methyl mercury builds up in fish through the food chain. Nearly all of the mercury found in fish is methyl mercury.

### What are polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)?

Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) are man-made oils that were once used in carbonless copying paper and in electrical equipment such as capacitors, transformers and fluorescent light ballasts. PCBs break down very slowly in the environment. PCBs tend to stay in sediments and build up in fish through the food chain.

### How do methyl mercury and PCBs affect human health?

The levels of these compounds found in Ohio fish are not known to cause immediate severe sickness. Long-lasting contaminants such as PCBs and mercury can build up in your body over time. It may take months or years of regularly eating contaminated fish to build up amounts that are a health concern. Health problems that may result from the contaminants in fish range from small, hard to detect health changes to birth defects, as well as mental and physical retardation in newborns. Mothers who eat highly contaminated fish for many years before becoming pregnant may have children who are slower to develop and learn. Therefore, women who plan to become pregnant should follow the fish consumption advice given to pregnant and nursing women for several years before becoming pregnant. It takes up to six years or more for the body to get rid of PCBs, and up to one year to get rid of mercury.

The advisories that protect sensitive populations also protect all other members of the general public.

## 2016 Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory

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### How can I reduce my health risk?

Choose smaller fish (within the legal size limit). Smaller fish within a species tend to have fewer contaminants than older, larger fish, and are sometimes tastier and more tender.

Choose leaner fish. Fish that are higher in fat — Channel Catfish and Carp, for example — will likely have more fat and may have higher levels of PCBs and similar chemicals in their bodies. Yellow Perch, Sunfish and Crappies are examples of lean fish.

Trim and cook your fish properly to reduce risk. This is important because all meal advice given in the advisory assumes that this has been done. Proper preparation reduces your exposure to organic chemicals like PCBs and certain pesticides. More than 50 percent of these contaminants can be eliminated by trimming fatty areas before cooking and by cooking fish in ways that allow fat to drip away. Mercury levels cannot be reduced by trimming because mercury binds to protein (the meat portion) of the fish.

### What groups are most sensitive to contaminants?

Contaminants in fish can be harmful to people of all ages, but the fetus and young children are especially sensitive to contaminants because their organs and systems are not yet fully developed. They are less able to deal with toxic substances than an adult. Contaminants in fish can affect your baby more than they affect you and can be hard to detect. It is best to prevent childhood exposure to fish contaminants in the first place. In summary, the most sensitive groups are unborn children and children age 15 and under. This also includes women who plan to become pregnant, women who are pregnant and nursing mothers.

Periodically check the website [epa.ohio.gov/dsw/fishadvisory/index.aspx](http://epa.ohio.gov/dsw/fishadvisory/index.aspx) or contact the Ohio Department of Health or Ohio EPA for the latest information on Ohio sport fish consumption advisories.