



Prescriptions for PREVENTION



Guidance from the Western States
Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit

Mercury Environmental Exposure



Did you know?

Mercury can be found in seafood and some consumer products, and can escape into the air easily from broken products containing mercury. Although it is a naturally occurring metalloid, even small amounts of mercury can hurt brains that are growing and developing.

Do

- ✓ **Eat a well-balanced diet**, including organic foods like fruits, vegetables, **and a variety of low-mercury fish.**
- ✓ **Fish is good for you but avoid:**
 - ✓ Fish high in mercury content including tilefish from the Gulf of Mexico, shark, swordfish, king mackerel and some tuna;
 - ✓ Safer fish choices include pollock, haddock, cod, salmon, shrimp, and tilapia;
 - ✓ Pregnant people should limit even low mercury fish to 2-3 servings per week and canned light tuna to 4 ounces a week.
- ✓ **Follow local fish advisories** regarding safe consumption of locally-caught fish. Find out more at [EPA fish advisories](#), and [FDA advice for those who are pregnant](#).
- ✓ **Dispose of mercury containing products properly** to keep out of waste stream. (Check [EPA resources](#).)

Don't

- ✗ Don't handle broken mercury products without proper safety management techniques. (EPA provides guidance [here](#).)
- ✗ Don't have your dentist use mercury containing amalgam for new dental fillings (especially for children under 6; people who are pregnant, nursing or plan to become pregnant).
- ✗ Don't purchase imported skin care or skin lightening products (see [FDA Consumer Update](#)). Some contain dangerous amounts of mercury:
 - Don't purchase or use products containing the words "mercurous chloride", "calomel", "mercuric", "mercurio", or "mercury" or products with no ingredients on the label such as skin lightening creams. See CDC's "[Mercury in Skin Creams](#)."



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