What Can I Do?

1. Look up safe eating guidelines.
   Go to: www.oehha.ca.gov/fish or the back of your fishing regulations booklet and look up the places where you go fishing for advice about how much fish of each kind you can safely eat from that location.

   No information? Not necessarily safe.
   If the location or kind of fish you are interested in is not listed, it does NOT mean it’s safe to eat. It just means that not enough information has been collected to tell either way.

   If the lake or reservoir where you are fishing is not specifically listed, you should follow the state-issued guidelines to the right:

2. Know your fish.
   The information provided in this brochure is designed to help you make good choices about the fish you catch, based on which fish generally contain more mercury than others.

   What we do know:
   - Smaller, younger fish have less mercury than older, larger fish.
   - Predatory fish (ones that eat other fish, for example bass or brown trout) have higher mercury.
   - Fish that have been planted generally have lower mercury.

3. Make your voice heard!
   We all deserve to eat fish we catch, and to have good information about how to protect ourselves and our families. Tell your elected officials it’s time to clean up mercury from lakes and rivers in the Sierra, and provide more information about which fish are safe to eat.

To learn more, voice your concerns, or get involved go to: www.sierrafund.org

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A Guide to Eating Fish from California Lakes and Reservoirs

Without Site-Specific Advice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women (18-45 Years)</th>
<th>Women (46+ Years)</th>
<th>Men (18+ Years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eat the Good Fish</td>
<td>Avoid the Bad Fish</td>
<td>Choose the Right Fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating fish that are low in chemicals may provide health benefits to children and adults.</td>
<td>Eating fish with higher levels of chemicals like mercury or PCBs may cause health problems in children and adults.</td>
<td>Chemicals may be more harmful to unborn babies and children.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| | | |
| Rainbow Trout | Catfish | Bullhead |
| high in omega-3s | Sunfish Species | Brown Trout 16 inches or less |
| | | high in omega-3s |
| Black Bass Species | Carp | Brown Trout over 16 inches |

**Serving Size**
A serving of fish is about the size and thickness of your hand. Give children smaller servings.

**Fish Preparation**
Some chemicals are higher in the skin, fat, and guts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Adults</th>
<th>For Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eat only the skinless fillet</td>
<td>Eat only the meat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**More Information**
Many lakes and reservoirs in the Sierra Nevada have site-specific guidelines for eating fish. Check for site-specific information for the water bodies where you fish at: www.oehha.ca.gov/fish
Gold Rush Impacts

The footprint of the California Gold Rush stretches from the Sierra to the sea and includes the widespread distribution of toxics such as mercury, arsenic and lead.

Since 2006, The Sierra Fund has worked to address the legacy impacts of the Gold Rush in order to improve resiliency in our region.

Mercury: Toxic in the Body

• Mercury can damage the brain, central nervous system, immune system, kidneys and heart.
• In pregnant women, mercury can cause permanent learning disabilities in the developing fetus, even at very low levels.
• Children are particularly vulnerable.
• If you feel you, your baby or your child may be at risk, talk to your doctor.
• Are you pregnant or planning on becoming pregnant? Mercury stays in the human body for about 1 year. Start making healthy choices now.

Eating Fish Safely

• Avoid large predatory fish whether wild-cought or store bought.
• Eat smaller younger fish, which generally contain less mercury.
• Mercury is stored in the entire fish. You cannot clean the head, guts, fat and skin to get rid of it. Other toxins, like PCBs may be stored there so trimming off these areas is still a good idea.
• Check fish you plan to eat at the EPA and OEHHA websites. You can also visit a mercury calculator website such as the one at www.gotmercury.org.

Special thanks to the California Indian Environmental Alliance (CIEA) and OEHHA for use of material included in this brochure.

www.ciea-health.org
www.oehha.ca.gov

About The Sierra Fund

The Sierra Fund’s mission is to restore ecosystem and community resiliency in the Sierra Nevada region.

www.sierrafund.org

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Fish, Mercury and You

how to safely eat fish you catch in the Sierra Nevada

Addressing Gold Rush Impacts in the Sierra Nevada