

## COOKING FOR HEALTH

The ultimate way to enjoy the health benefits of seafood is by eating Japanese style fresh raw sashimi. The best ways to cook seafood, maintain seafood's health properties and minimise omega-3 fat losses, is by grilling, steaming or microwaving. 1 to 4 serves of a variety of seafood per week is recommended to maximise health benefits. Small portions of around 75 to 100g to accompany other base meals is a great way to add variety and frequency.

### What about mercury levels in fish?

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) updated its advice on mercury in fish caught and sold in Australia in 2004. The revised advice discusses the risks and levels of mercury in fish and sets out the number of serves of different types of fish that can be safely consumed for pregnant women, women planning pregnancy, children (up to 6 years) and the rest of the population. The FSANZ advice has been specifically developed for the Australian population and reflects local knowledge of our diets, the fish we eat and their mercury content. Further information on the FSANZ advice is available at [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)

PREGNANT & BREASTFEEDING WOMEN AND WOMEN PLANNING PREGNANCY	CHILDREN (UP TO 6 YEARS)
1 serve equals 150g	1 serve equals 75g
2-3 serves per week of any fish and seafood not listed below	
OR	
1 serve per fortnight of Shark (Flake) or Billfish (Broadbill, Swordfish and Marlin) and no other fish that fortnight	
OR	
1 serve per week of Orange Roughy (Deep Sea Perch) or Catfish and no other fish that week	
FOR THE REST OF THE POPULATION	
1 serve equals 150g	
2-3 serves per week of any fish and seafood	
OR	
1 serve per week of Shark (Flake) or Billfish (Broadbill, Swordfish and Marlin) and no other fish that week	

Source: Food Standards Australia New Zealand

For further information go to [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)



## YOUR SEAFOOD QUESTIONS ANSWERED

### How do fish oil supplements rate?

While fish oil supplements are fine to take, it is always better to try to get your nutrition through foods. Just as it's preferable to get vitamins and minerals through fruit and vegetables rather than supplements, the same applies for omega-3 fats and seafood. There are health benefits associated with the whole fish not just the oils. However if your needs are high for Omega-3's due to a health condition, you may not be able to obtain all your needs through your diet. Fish oil can play a valuable health role.

### Which one is more nutritious - fresh or salt water seafood?

When the essential fat content matters, there is little nutritional difference between fresh water seafood and salt water seafood if they both live in cold, southerly waters. However, salt water seafood have richer amounts of iodine, magnesium and sodium, which have multiple functions in the body.

### Is seafood, especially shellfish, high in cholesterol?

In the past, shellfish were excluded from low-cholesterol diets because they were believed to be high in cholesterol. However, new measuring techniques indicate that cholesterol levels are not significant in most seafood products. In fact, molluscs - such as clams, oysters, scallops and mussels - were found to have a large amount of sterols, which appear to have a beneficial effect because they inhibit the absorption of cholesterol eaten at the same meal.



## How to cook prawns in 5 easy steps

Per 1 kg.

- 1 Bring 2 1/2 litres of water to the boil, add 2 tablespoons of sea salt.
- 2 Add prawns to boiling water.
- 3 Cook for 3-4 minutes. Prawns are done when they float to the top of the water.  
To test, take out a prawn and hold it to the light, it is cooked when the flesh has shrunk from the shell slightly and the prawn looks translucent.
- 4 When they're done, remove them from the boiling water and place in a big bowl of iced water to cool them.
- 5 Peel and eat! Great on their own or serve with vinegar, lemon or just bread and butter.

Also great for use in salads, fried rice and many other dishes.

For more sensational seafood recipes or information on seafood, go to [www.fish.gov.au](http://www.fish.gov.au)

**GET HOOKED - EAT MORE FISH!**



# WHAT'S SO HEALTHY ABOUT SEAFOOD?

Seafood - something for every taste, every cuisine, every occasion!

## WHY CHOOSE SEAFOOD?



You may already know that seafood is healthy, but do you know why?

Seafood not only tastes great, it's healthy, convenient and versatile – nature's perfect fast food!

This brochure provides you with information on the health benefits of eating seafood; as well as healthy seafood meal ideas and recipes to inspire you.

## WHY IS SEAFOOD SO HEALTHY?

Seafood is an important part of a healthy diet and becoming the food of choice for the health-conscious. Some great reasons to eat seafood are shown in the nutrition information table opposite. It's brain food, and lots more!

In Australia we don't eat enough seafood. The Australian Dietary Guidelines advise eating one or two fish based meals per week (a serve of fish is 80 to 120g cooked weight). However according to the last National Dietary Survey only 1 in 4 of us reported eating fish at least once a week.

The impact of a Mediterranean type diet, which includes eating seafood regularly, has been examined in people who have established heart disease. One trial showed the Mediterranean diet to be more effective than a low-fat diet in reducing heart attack and death rates in the five-year follow up period. In fact, only two years into the study, the results were so striking that the trial was stopped and all participants were recommended to follow the Mediterranean diet.

### What is the Mediterranean diet?

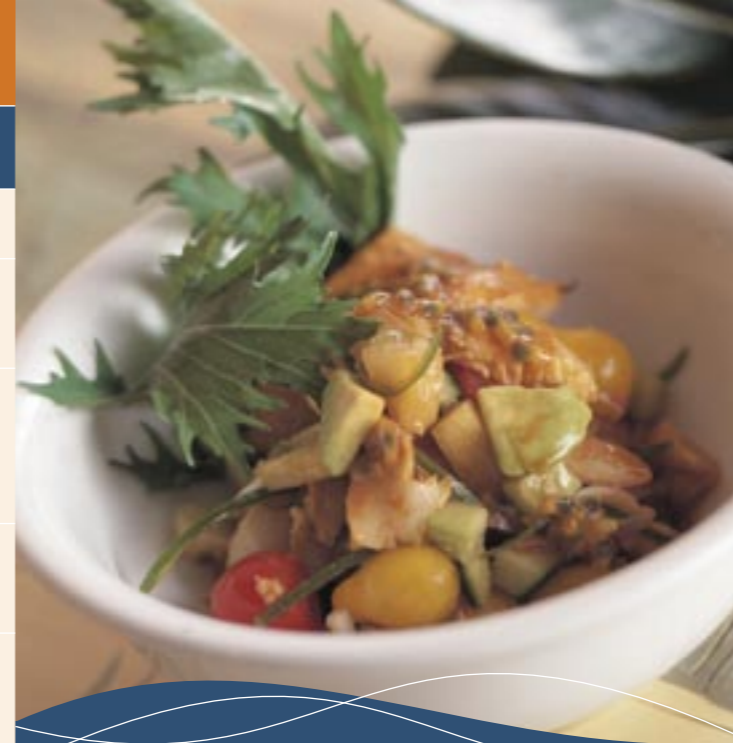
The Mediterranean diet consists of:

- more bread,
- more vegetables and legumes,
- more seafood,
- less meat (beef, lamb, pork) – replaced by poultry,
- no day without fruit,
- no butter or cream, and
- olive oil or other mono-unsaturated oil source.

## NUTRITION INFORMATION

	SEAFOOD IS TYPICALLY	BENEFITS TO HEALTH
ENERGY	Low in energy or kilojoules.	Ideal for those watching the scales.
PROTEIN	High in readily digestible protein.	Essential for growth and repair of muscles and a healthy immune system.
FAT, TOTAL	Low in fat but relatively high in 'good' fats such as omega-3's and omega-6's.	Provides the good fats essential to health.
SATURATED	Without almost any saturated fat.	Ideal to maintain a healthy heart. Most saturated fats increase blood cholesterol.
OMEGA FATS	The best natural source of omega-3 fats.  They also contain omega-6 fats, which are also found in plant-based foods.	Omega-3's are essential to life and good health. Important for the brain and nervous system. Hence fish really is brain food.  Omega-6's are important for growth and general health and well-being.
CHOLESTEROL	Low in cholesterol. Shellfish and crustaceans like prawns do contain cholesterol however only a small amount is usually absorbed.	Fits into a heart healthy diet.  Cholesterol in food is not the main predictor of blood cholesterol.
VITAMINS	High in vitamins A, B, E & D.  One of the few natural sources of vitamin D.	Essential for maintaining good health.  Essential for healthy bones.
MINERALS	High in minerals iodine and calcium.  Seafood is the best source of iodine.	Essential for maintaining good health.  Iodine is important for the thyroid.  Calcium is essential for strong bones and teeth.

For nutritional information on particular species go to [www.fish.gov.au](http://www.fish.gov.au)



*Fish do not lose their positive health benefits by being canned*

### Omega-3's

Omega-3's are a type of fatty acid (long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acid). Seafood is the best natural source of omega-3's in the diet. Omega-3's are 'good' fats which are vitally important for health and long life. For example they are vital during pregnancy for the baby's brain development and vision; they are important to maintain a healthy heart, healthy immune system and have also been shown to benefit conditions such as diabetes, certain cancers, childhood asthma, obesity and arthritis.

Excellent sources of omega-3's include oily seafood such as salmon, trout, mackerel, sardines, herring, tuna, anchovies, tiger prawns and blue mussels. Plant sources (like linseed, soy and canola) of omega-3's can also be important, but they need to be made longer by the body to equate to those from seafood.

### Omega-6's

Omega-6's are another type of fatty acid (long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acid) which is important for growth and general health and well-being. Omega-6 fats are also found in seafood of all kinds. However plant foods such as sunflower seeds, corn and soybean are usually a better source.

Eating seafood regularly improves the balance of omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids in the diet.

## SEAFOOD – THE SUPER FOOD

Gram for gram, fish is one of the lowest-fat, highest protein foods you can eat. Australian seafood has 10-100 times higher levels of some of these good fats than other animal protein foods such as beef, lamb, chicken or pork. See how seafood stacks up against other popular protein foods in the table below (based on per 100g raw weight):

	ATLANTIC SALMON*	FLATHEAD*	LEAN BEEF (FILLET)	TRIM LAMB	SKINLESS CHICKEN BREAST	LEAN PORK STEAK
Energy kj	541	380	536	480	567	516
Protein g	18	20	21	21	21	22
Total Fat g	3	1	5	4	6	4
Omega-3 mg	549	190	107	124	32	43
Cholesterol mg	18	19	67	65	66	58

\* Australian seafood users manual – making the most of the world's best.