Mercury Mythbusters

Mercury Facts
Mercury is a natural metal. It is released from rock, coal-fired power plants, and waste incinerators into the environment.

Methylmercury, the organic form of mercury, accumulates in fish. When bigger fish eat smaller fish, they also accumulate their toxins.

The concentrations vary depending on the fish's age, diet, and region of harvest.

Why Should We Be Concerned About Mercury?
Mercury affects development of the nervous system, and normal functioning of the brain, kidneys, and heart.

Bigger fish contain higher concentrations of mercury, and can lead to health risks if we consume them too frequently.

What Can We Do?
Fish is part of a healthy diet. Choose fish that are lower in mercury. Bigger fish, which have more mercury, should be consumed less frequently.

Use the diagram below to make healthy choices. Avoid "red" choices like swordfish and tuna when possible. Feel comfortable making "green" choices like salmon and shrimp 2-3 times per week.

Catfish, Squid, Whitefish, Alaskan Cod, Sole, Rainbow Trout, Blue Crab, Bluefish, Halibut, Maine Lobster, Swordfish, Tuna

Clams, Mussels, Oysters, Perch, Ocean Salmon, Sardines, Shrimp, Tilapia, Anchovies, Arctic Char, Striped Bass, Flounder, Haddock, Herring, Scallops

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