



The Importance Of Eating Seafood — Especially For Pregnant Women

(ARA) — Americans eat too little seafood and should eat more for better brain development in babies and heart health in adults, according to the final report of the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee.

Made up of the country's top nutrition experts, the committee spent two years reviewing the latest science and crafting recommended changes to the government's nutrition advice. The advice is updated every five years and each time something stands out. This year, that is the new advice about eating seafood. Here's what the final report says:

- Eating two servings of seafood each week was shown to reduce the risk of dying from heart disease (whether you have heart disease or not).
- Eating at least two servings of seafood each week during pregnancy and breastfeeding was shown to raise omega-3 levels and help improve babies' eyesight and brain development.
- The health benefits of eating a variety of cooked seafood outweigh concerns with mercury, even among pregnant and nursing women and young children.

"Any questions about the safety and healthfulness of seafood are silenced by a report of this caliber," says registered dietitian Jennifer McGuire, manager of nutrition communication for the National Fisheries Institute. "We're at the point where people can replace emotion-based misinformation with science-based advice that will help reverse the health problems associated with a typical low-seafood American diet."

This encouraging advice is also reflected in a 2009 Food and Drug Administration draft report. The report says the FDA concluded that the greatest benefits to pregnant women and women of childbearing age would come from eating more fish.

Two of the world's top experts on brain health, Drs. Thomas Brenna of Cornell University and Michael Crawford of London Metropolitan University, are urging the FDA to finalize their report and update the 2004 advice about eating fish during pregnancy. In an open letter to the FDA they wrote: "A consistent stream of new publications and international scientific evaluations has persuaded us that this advice has become outdated and that it may be inadvertently causing harm, inconsistent with your public health mission. Mothers and children worldwide deserve your best efforts to provide advice consistent with the best science available." To date, 129 research scientists and physicians have signed on to the open letter.

To learn more about the health benefits of a seafood-rich diet - including recipes, video cooking techniques and how to shop for seafood advice, visit www.aboutseafood.com.

How You Can Tell The Difference Between Allergy And A Cold

(ARA) — A visit with your doctor is the best way to determine whether you have a cold or an allergy. While allergy symptoms and cold symptoms are very similar, there are some signs to look for if you want to know the difference.

1. Take a look at the color of your nasal discharge, mucous or saliva. Both allergies and colds cause a runny nose, but for cold sufferers, the discharge is usually green or brown - which is a sign of an infection. "If the mucous is clear - it is probably an allergy," says Dr. Carl Wurster, chair, Allied Health Department, at Brown Mackie College - Boise. The allergy comes from an allergen, while the cold indicates exposure to a virus.

2. Allergy sufferers do not generally have to deal with body pain, but if you have a headache and feel lots of aches and pains, it's probably a cold. If you have a viral cold, you'll also experience fatigue and a severe sore throat. "A mild sore throat may accompany an allergy, but with a cold you could lose your voice and have hoarseness. It is rare to be hoarse with allergies and lose your voice," adds Wurster.

3. Check your calendar and keep track of how long you've been sneezing or feeling sick. A cold can last up to two weeks. Allergies are often seasonal, especially if the trigger comes from grass or tree pollen. "If your allergy comes from something inside your house like, mold, or dust - the symptoms can be constant or come and go - depending on the exposure level to the indoor allergy source,"

says Wurster. "Allergy sufferers may also have nosebleeds because pollen gets deposited inside the front of nose which triggers the sneeze reflex. Sometimes allergy sufferers have a line across the tip of their nose and puffiness under their lower eyelids because of heparin (a substance naturally generated from the white cells of the body)," he says.

4. If your eyes, nose, throat or mouth itch, it's a sure bet that you are reacting to some kind of allergen which can come from pollen or even an allergen in the workplace or on a college campus. If your allergy stems from something in your workplace, some industries have set up "clean rooms," where employees wear "clean suits" in highly-sterile rooms. Some employees feel claustrophobic in clean rooms, but people with allergies tend to like it.

"With allergies, you will run a low-grade fever of 100.1 or 100.2 F. With the viral or bacterial cold your temperature will be a degree higher - 103 or 104 F," says Wurster. Hay fever is the old term for allergies "because you get symptoms of a cold with a low grade fever," Wurster says. The average person does not know whether their sickness is viral, bacterial or the result of an allergen.

"Allergy sufferers should consider using antihistamines at night," Wurster says. "A cold will not respond to an antihistamine. Claritin and Afrin would be effective during the day because they don't cause drowsiness. Take a decongestant to prevent

mucous from building up in your sinuses."

Not being able to sleep at night is another sign of an allergy. "You should elevate yourself on a bunch of pillows to get the drainage of fluid out of your head to help you fall asleep," says Wurster. Wurster says there is one good thing about having allergies. "Allergy sufferers are genetically-coordinated with high intelligence." He added that "the peak incidence of allergies can be absent from the onset of puberty to the mid-20s, but can show up when the patient is in their 30s and late 40s."

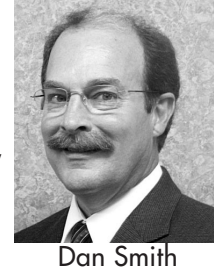
For cold sufferers, the key is to visit your physician because

you may need antibiotics. Try to avert getting a cold. "When it first starts, rinse your nose out with salt water four to five times a day. It can prevent a bacterial cold and treat sinus infections," he says.

"For some people with allergies, mucous gets backed up in their sinuses which serves as fertile ground for bacterial culture. What could have been a two-to-three-day allergy can turn into sinusitis, bronchitis or a cold which includes congestion and the risk of an upper respiratory virus infection," says Wurster who added, "It's important to visit your doctor to see if your lungs are clear."

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