

Seafood

Author: Țurcan Anastasia

Ling. cons: A. Jechiu

Seafood is any sea animal or plant that is served as food and eaten by humans. Seafoods include seawater animals, such as fish and shellfish. The term seafood is also applied to similar animals from fresh water and all edible aquatic animals are collectively referred to as seafood. Edible seaweeds are also seafood, and are widely eaten around the world.

The harvesting of wild seafood is known as fishing and the cultivation and farming of seafood is known as aquaculture, mariculture, or in the case of fish, fish farming. Seafood is often distinguished from meat, although it is still animal and is excluded in a vegetarian diet. Seafood is an important source of protein in many diets around the world. There are over 32,000 species of fish. However, only a small number of the total species are considered food fish and are commonly eaten.

Seafood is consumed all over the world; it provides the world's prime source of high-quality protein: 14–16% of the animal protein consumed world-wide; over one billion people rely on seafood as their primary source of animal protein. Fish is among the most common food allergens. The Food Standards Agency recommends that we eat at least two portions of seafood per week, one of which should be oil-rich. These oils are vital for human biological functions especially brain functionality [1].

It was shown that the nutrients and minerals in seafood can make improvements in brain development and reproduction and has highlighted the role for seafood in the functionality of the human body. Fish is thought to protect the heart because eating less saturated fat and more Omega-3 can help to lower the amount of cholesterol and triglycerides in the blood – two fats that, in excess, increase the risk of heart disease [2].

The human brain is 10-12% lipids, including the Omega-3 fat DHA. Recent studies suggest that older people can boost their

brain power by eating more oily fish, with those who enjoy it regularly are able to remember better and think faster than those who eat none.

Fish is high in minerals such as iodine and selenium, which keep the body running smoothly. Iodine is essential for the thyroid gland, which controls growth and metabolism, while selenium is used to make enzymes that protect cell walls from cancer-causing free radicals. Fish is also an excellent source of vitamin A, which is needed for healthy skin and eyes, and vitamin D, which is needed to help the body absorb calcium to strengthen teeth and bones.

Fish and shellfish have a natural tendency to concentrate mercury in their bodies. Species of fish that are high on the food chain, such as shark, swordfish, king mackerel, albacore tuna, and tilefish contain higher concentrations of mercury than others. The first occurrence of widespread mercury poisoning in humans occurred this way in Minamata, Japan, now called Minamata disease [3].

In conclusion seafood is an important component of a healthy diet of man. They contain high quality protein and many essential nutrients. Seafood hardly contain saturated fats and rich in omega-3 fatty acids. Use of seafood can help prevent many diseases.

Bibliography:

1. Konstantinova L., Dubrovin S., *Raw fish industry*, St. Petersburg, 2005, p73-78.
2. Robson A., *Shellfish view of omega-3 and sustainable fisheries*, 2006, p 89-91.
3. Wheaton F., Lawson T., *Manufacture of food products from ocean resources*, Moscow, 1989, p 45-47.