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***Mercury vs. Methyl.***

An important distinction must be made between mercury and methyl - mercury.

Mercury occurs naturally in the environment.

Volcanoes and geologic deposits may contain naturally occurring mercury.

Human-made sources however include emissions from industry.

These airborne emissions eventually fall to the earth's surface, contaminating soils and surface water.

When mercury enters aquatic resources, such as the water bodies that host fish and sea life - bacteria initiate a chemical reaction that converts mercury to its toxic form, methyl- mercury.

This is the form of mercury in fish and fish products and fish oils that raises health concerns.

### **Health risks and benefits.**

(Salmon used as an example) Wild salmon as an example is an excellent source of omega-3 fatty acids.

Omega-3 fatty acids in fish contain the important needed EPA and DHA can lower blood pressure and reduce risk of developing heart disease. However, you should monitor wild salmon consumption if you are using it as a source of nutrition.

The toxic Methyl- mercury found in wild salmon can accumulate in the body's tissues.

Then, if eating the affected cold water fish it can have a negative impact during your dog's pregnancy or nursing the young can effect brain development and nervous system.

### **Fish farm-raised vs. wild Salmon.**

As an example again using Salmon.

When considering buying, it is important for you to know the source of the any fish you want.

A 2004 study in the journal Science found that farmed salmon had significantly higher levels of contaminants than their wild counterparts did.

The study went so far as to suggest that the health risks may outweigh the health benefits of eating farmed salmon.

### **Geographic location.**

Geographic location plays a key role on the mercury content of salmon, both wild and farm raised. The 2004 study identified European farm-raised salmon as having higher amounts of mercury.

In terms of wild salmon, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, or EPA, recognizes similar variations with its Fish Advisories web page, which provides information about potential hazards of consuming wild salmon from certain areas.

Variations may exist because of industry concentration, as well as geological factors.

### **Salmon consumption guidelines.**

The EPA and the (FDA) Food and Drug Administration recognize salmon as a low-mercury fish.

Yet, the current recommendations are to consume no more than 12 ounces of low-mercury fish a week.

There is no distinction made between wild and farm-raised fish.

A 2008 study published in Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry confirmed the efficacy of grouping wild and farm-raised salmon.

The study found negligible differences in mercury content between the two sources from salmon in British Columbia, finding salmon a safe source of omega-3 fatty acids.

### **Other references.**

\* [U.S. Geological Survey: Mercury in the Environment](#)

\* "Journal of the American Medical Association": Eating Fish: Health Benefits and Risks; J. Torpy; January 2006

\* [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: Mercury---Health Effects](#)

\* "Science"; Global Assessment of Organic Contaminants in Farmed Salmon; R. Hites et al.; January 2004

\* "Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry"; Mercury and Other Trace Elements in Farmed and Wild Salmon from British Columbia, Canada; B. Kelly et al; January 2008

\* <http://www.livestrong.com/article/139212-information-mercury-wild-salmon/#ixzz23pSf7OAA>