

Canada issues canned tuna guidelines

February 21 2007

Canadian health officials are issuing a warning about the risks of mercury in canned albacore tuna for women and children.

The new consumption guidelines, issued Monday, say women who are or who may become pregnant, or who are breastfeeding can eat up to four servings of canned albacore tuna each week. Children between 1 and 4 years old can eat up to one serving of albacore tuna each week, while children between 5 and 11 years old can eat up to two servings of albacore tuna each week.

The guidelines are for canned albacore tuna only. Health Canada said canned light tuna contains other species of tuna such as skipjack, yellowfin and tongol, which are relatively low in mercury.

A recent CBC investigation into mercury levels found that 13 percent of the 60 cans of albacore tuna tested by an Ottawa lab exceeded Health Canada's mercury guideline of 0.5 parts per million.

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