

# Tyler Schmalenbach

## What You Should Know About Methylmercury in Fish

1. What problems does mercury cause and who is most vulnerable to its effects?

The most vulnerable to the effects of Methylmercury in fish are unborn and newborn children and anyone who consume lots of seafood rich in mercury. Some effects of mercury are numbness around the mouth and in limbs, trouble walking, difficulty thinking clearly, upset stomach, hair loss, and fatigue. People who eat fish higher on the food chain are more at risk.

2. In the 2007 study of blood mercury levels in NYC residents, what percentage of adults had elevated blood mercury levels (above EPA standards)? **25%** What percentage of Asians? **50%**

Why do you think this difference exists?

This difference probably exists because Asians tend to have more seafood in their diet.

### How Does Mercury Get Into Fish? *Click this heading in the left-hand column to read this page*

3. What are the three main sources of mercury that is released into the environment, according to this article?

Although mercury is naturally occurring in the environment, the three main sources of mercury is coal burning, gold mining, and chloralkali manufacturing.

4. How much have mercury inputs to the environment increased over the past two centuries?

These sources of mercury increased threefold. (3x)

5. a) What characteristic of fish is the most important indicator of how much mercury they will contain? Why do these types of fish contain the most mercury?

The larger fish that live longer and are closer to the tops of food chains are going to have more mercury in their system through the process of biomagnification.

- b) What are some examples of fish that are particularly high in mercury?

Examples of fish high in mercury are tuna, shark, and swordfish