

The Magazine

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LESS FOR
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Clint Eastwood

His brave adventures,
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*PLUS Raquel Welch, Scott Hamilton,
Tom Joyner, and six others who inspire us

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How a whole town got
healthy and you can too

Why Teri
Bradshaw
hates the
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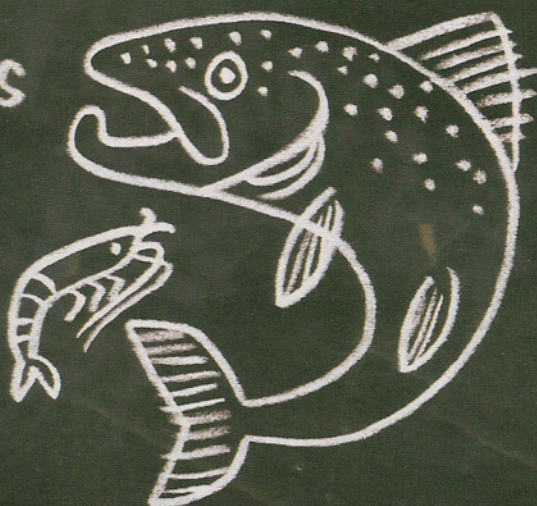
FISHING FOR FACTS

EATING FISH CAN EASE ARTHRITIS AND HELP PREVENT DEMENTIA—BUT A NEW STUDY RAISES OLD CONCERNS ABOUT MERCURY. HOW SAFE IS FISH? TAKE OUR TRUE-FALSE QUIZ

Mercury is a bigger problem for kids than for people 50+.



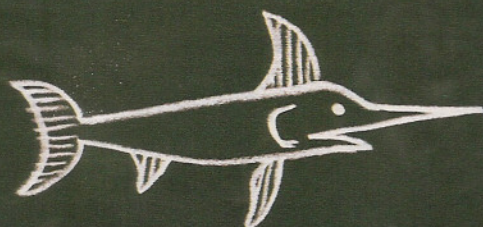
TRUE. A 2004 federal advisory warned certain groups—including pregnant women and young children—against eating fish with high mercury levels, because mercury can damage the brain and nervous system in unborn babies and young children. But older people, with their fully developed systems, can tolerate higher amounts, says Donald Hensrud, M.D., a nutrition specialist with the Mayo Clinic.



Fatty fish are good for you.

TRUE. Fatty fish such as salmon and herring are high in unsaturated

omega-3 fatty acids, which can lower blood pressure, enhance immune function, and improve arthritis symptoms. Most fish (and shellfish) are also low in saturated fat—just avoid frying them and adding rich sauces or lots of butter, says Hensrud. And if your jeans are feeling snug, fish can help you get trim: they're high-protein and low-calorie, says Janet Brill, Ph.D., R.D., a nutritionist and the author of *Cholesterol Down*. Worried about sustainability? Try eco-friendly Alaska salmon and Atlantic herring. Learn more at blueocean.org/seafood.



All fish have roughly the same levels of mercury.

FALSE. Most fish contain traces of mercury (primarily from industrial pollution), but levels vary. Large

fish that are higher in the food chain—such as sharks, swordfish, king mackerel, and tilefish—accumulate more contaminants because they consume lots of smaller fish. Your best bet: Eat smaller fish and shellfish (which have lower mercury levels), such as salmon, cod, crabs, pollack, and flounder.



You should eat fish once a week.

FALSE. Aim for at least twice, per the American Heart Association, particularly for fatty fish. "At least two servings a week will protect against the risk of dying from heart disease and the risk of dying from sudden cardiac death," Hensrud says. "The benefits of fish far outweigh the risks." —Leslie Quander Wooldridge

In the News

FRESHWATER WORRIES

So here's why fish is making headlines again. In August 2009 a federal study found that about a quarter of freshwater fish had mercury levels above those recommended by the Environmental Protection Agency. But there's a catch: the study generally refers to fish caught recreationally; grocery stores typically sell commercially caught fish. And the EPA maintains that fish in most of the nation's waters are safe. For more fishing info, find links to local advisories at epa.gov/waterscience/fish. —L.Q.W.