

MODULE 1

Easy and Tasty Fish Meals

The purpose of this module is to introduce participants to easy, tasty and healthy ways to prepare fish. Selection, preparation and nutrition benefits of fish will be explored as participants practice simple cooking techniques.

Learning objectives

By the end of the session participants will be able to:

- Discuss the health benefits of fish.
- Identify examples of fatty fish.
- Use a variety of cooking techniques to prepare fish (e.g. bake, broil, grill parchment/foil packets, pan-fry).
- Discuss safe food handling practices for fish (e.g. selecting, storing, thawing, preventing cross-contamination).
- Demonstrate safe use of knives.

Suggested outline

Easy and Tasty Fish Meals	Approximate Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome and Introduction	5 min
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health and nutrition benefits of fish	10 min
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Selecting and preparing fish	10 min
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of Recipes and techniques	10 min
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hands on cooking (using Foodland Recipes)<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ kitchen safety○ safe food handling○ cooking techniques (bake, broil, grill, parchment/foil packets, pan-fry)	60 min
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tasting	10-15 min
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clean up	10-15 min
	2 hours

Organizing the hands-on cooking

The modules are designed to provide hands-on cooking experience for participants. Each cooking session will require planning and preparation. Begin by reviewing the background information provided at the beginning of the module.

The optimal group size is 6-12 participants. Divide participants into three small groups. Each group will be responsible for the preparation of **one** recipe. For smaller groups or if your budget is limited, you may choose to divide participants into two groups. In this case, you will choose only two recipes for the groups to prepare.

Since participants will be preparing the recipes, there is no need to prepare anything in advance. However, if you have purchased frozen fish, you will need to thaw it in advance. Although the pesto recipe is not intended to be prepared during the session, you may wish to prepare it in advance rather than using store-bought pesto.

You will need to prepare “stations” for each group. At each station, include the supplies, ingredients and equipment that will be needed for the preparation of the assigned recipe.

Ask groups to work together to prepare their assigned recipe. Encourage them to carefully read and follow the steps on the recipe. Check-in with each group throughout the session to provide guidance and demonstrate techniques as required.

A minimum of two facilitators is recommended. However, the overall skill level of participants will determine how many facilitators will be required to deliver this module. Groups with more advanced skills can work independently with less guidance from the facilitator(s).

Participants within the group will likely have varied skill levels. Try to include participants with fewer skills with a group of participants with more advanced skills.

Preparation checklist

Handouts

- Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* for each person
www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide
- FISH: A Healthy and Tasty Choice*

Recipes

- Fish with tomato salsa
- Fish, green bean and pesto packets
- Breaded fish with sweet potato fingers

Equipment and Supplies

Fish with tomato salsa:

- sharp knives
- serrated knife
- cutting board
- measuring cups and spoons
- large bowl
- baking dish
- spatula

Fish, green bean and pesto packets:

- foil or parchment paper
- sharp knives
- cutting board
- baking sheet

Breaded fish with sweet potato fingers:

- 3 shallow dishes
- measuring cups and spoons
- whisk
- large fry pan
- spatula
- sharp knives
- cutting board
- large bowl
- baking sheet

Other items required:

- serving and eating utensils
- plates
- napkins
- dish soap, dish cloths, and dish towels

- paper towel
- oven mitts

Ingredients

- olive oil
- salt
- pepper

Fish with tomato salsa:

- 2 tomatoes
- 1 cucumber
- fresh basil
- red wine vinegar or lime juice
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 lb fresh or frozen fish fillets

Fish, green beans and pesto packets:

- 2 cups green beans
- 2 lemons
- 4 fresh or frozen fish fillets
- prepared pesto

Breaded fish with sweet potato fingers:

- 4 fresh or frozen fish fillets (any white fish)
- ¼ cup flour
- 2 eggs
- ½ cup bread crumbs
- 3 small sweet potatoes

Background information for the leader

Nutrition Benefits of Fish

- Canada's Food Guide recommends that Canadians eat at least two Food Guide Servings of fish each week. This is 150 grams (5 oz) of fish each week – about the size of two decks of cards or 1 cup.
- Fish contain omega-3 fats called EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) and DHA (docosahexaenoic acid). Omega 3 fats are healthy unsaturated fats that play a role in heart health. In addition, since fish is low in harmful saturated fats, choosing fish helps displace high fat foods. Of course, deep-fried fish or fast food fish sandwiches do not have the same heart health benefits. For the greatest health benefits, fish should be prepared using lower fat cooking methods such as steaming, grilling, baking or light pan-frying.
- In addition to heart health, omega-3 fats have many other health benefits for adults and children. In infants, omega-3 fats help with brain, nerve and eye development. Research is currently being done to see if omega-3 fats may reduce the risk of cancer, dementia, Alzheimer's disease, depression and rheumatoid arthritis.

Health Benefits of Fish:

- Lower risk of heart attack and stroke
- Contributes to healthy eyes and nervous system
- Role in brain development in infants
- Excellent source of protein that is low in fat.
- May reduce the risk of certain cancers

- All fish contain at least some omega-3 fats (DHA and EPA) but the best source is fatty fish such as salmon, trout, mackerel, sardines, herring, anchovies and Arctic char.
- Other foods contain a type of omega-3 fat called ALA (alpha-linolenic acid). ALA has some of the same health benefits as DHA and EPA. Good sources of ALA are flaxseed, canola and soybean oil, soy products and walnuts.

Best sources of omega 3 fats:

DHA and EPA

- Salmon
- Trout
- Mackerel
- Sardines
- Herring
- Anchovies
- Arctic char
- DHA-enriched eggs
- DHA-enriched milk
- DHA-enriched margarine

ALA

- ground flaxseed and flaxseed oil
- canola oil
- soybean oil
- soy products (e.g. soy beverage, tofu, soybeans)
- walnuts

Fish and Mercury

There are certain types of fish that should be limited due to high levels of mercury. Because mercury affects the developing brain, it is especially important for women that may become pregnant, are pregnant or breastfeeding, as well as young children to limit their exposure to mercury.

Limit high mercury fish (fresh/frozen):

- Albacore “white” tuna
(light tuna e.g. skipjack, yellowfin or tongol has less mercury)
- Shark
- Swordfish
- Marlin
- Orange roughy
- Escolar

General Population: 150 g per week

Women who are or may become pregnant or who are breastfeeding: 150 g per month

Children 5-11 years old: 125 g per month

Children 1-4 years old: 75 g per month

What about sport fish?

The levels of mercury in fresh water fish can vary. Find out about any fish advisories from provincial and territorial authorities before eating it. Get a copy of [Guide to Eating Sport Fish in Ontario](#) from your local public health unit or the Ministry of the Environment.

Selecting and Preparing Fish

Stores that specialize in fish offer the best selection of fresh fish and seafood. Most grocery stores also have a good variety of fresh and frozen fish and seafood. Fish can be purchased fresh or frozen. It may be whole, or cut into fillets or steaks. Some fish can also be purchased in a can.

Whole fish is usually the least expensive and freshest fish you can buy. The skin acts as a protective covering and keeps the fish more flavourful and juicy. However, whole fish requires a great deal of preparation.

Fillets are boneless pieces or sections of any kind of fish. They may or may not be skinless.

Steaks are the cross sections from large round fish. They are usually about 1 inch (2.5 cm) thick. Steaks may contain some bones and often the outside edge is covered with skin. Note: fish skin is edible, just be careful that all the scales have been removed.

Tips for selecting and storing fish:

- 1) Smell it. Fresh fish should smell sweet. Fishy or strong odours means the fish is past its prime.
- 2) Look at it. Whole fish should look like it was just caught. Look for bright eyes and firm flesh. Fish fillets or steaks should be firm and bright looking, with no brown spots or discolouration.
- 3) Store fresh fish in the refrigerator and use it within one to two days. Otherwise, wrap it tightly and freeze it.

Frozen fish

Frozen fish is a convenient option. Store fish in the freezer up to 4-6 months. Keep fish frozen until ready for cooking. Follow the steps below for thawing fish. Cook it as soon as it is thawed.

Canned fish

Canned fish is a convenient and economical choice. Canned salmon and tuna is already cooked - just drain the liquids, and it's ready to eat or add to recipes. The skin and bones in canned salmon can be removed or simply mashed up. The bones provide a good source of calcium.

Unopened canned fish can be stored in the cupboard at room temperature for up to 3 years. Check the best before date on the can.

Once opened, remove fish from the can, store in an air tight container in the fridge and use within 3-4 days. You can freeze canned fish for up to 3 months.

Choices that support healthy oceans

People can support responsible fishing practices by choosing fish that are caught or farmed in environmentally sustainable ways. This helps ensure that enough fish will remain in the oceans for years to come. For more information on seafood choices that support responsible fishing and farming practices, go to www.seachoice.org.

How to thaw fish

The safest way to thaw fish is in the refrigerator. Remove fish from all packaging and place on a tray or plate. Cover with plastic wrap and allow to thaw in the refrigerator for 8-10 hours. If the fish is taken out of the freezer and put in the refrigerator in the morning, it should be thawed by that evening.

To quickly thaw fish, cut a corner of the package with a knife. Set the package in a large bowl in the sink and run cold water over it. Rotate the package occasionally. Do not let the water sit and do not use hot water. Cook or refrigerate as soon as the fish is thawed.

Do not thaw fish in the microwave. Microwaving may cook the fish on the edges and leave the fish dry or rubbery.

Safe Food Handling

Safe steps in food handling, cooking and storage are essential to prevent foodborne illness. Follow the four guidelines to keep food safe:

- Clean
- Separate
- Cook
- Chill

CLEAN

- Wash hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water before and after handling food.
- Clean and sanitize equipment, cooking surfaces and counters before and after cooking. Use hot soapy water or a bleach sanitizer.
- Rinse raw fruits and vegetables with clean, running water before you prepare and eat them.

BLEACH SANITIZER

- Combine 5 mL (1 tsp) of bleach with 750 mL (3 cups) of water in a labeled spray bottle.
- After cleaning, spray sanitizer on the surface and let stand briefly.
- Rinse with clean water, and air dry (or use clean towels).

SEPARATE

- Keep raw food away from other food while shopping, and while storing, preparing and serving foods.
- Use separate equipment and utensils such as knives and cutting boards for handling raw foods.
- When serving cooked food, do not reuse the same plates and utensils that raw food sat on.

CHILL

- Bacteria can grow in the danger zone between 4°C and 60°C (40°F to 140°F).
- To prevent the growth of harmful bacteria, keep cold foods cold. Do not keep food in the danger zone for longer than two hours.
- Plan ahead: thaw food in the refrigerator, where the food will stay at a safe, constant temperature of 4°C (40°F) or below.

COOK

- Keep hot foods at or above 60°C (140°F).
- It is best to use a digital food thermometer to check that the temperature of cooked foods has reached the correct internal temperature.
- Cook fish to an internal temperature of 60 C (140 F). Fish should turn from translucent to opaque and flake easily with a fork.

Kitchen Safety

Prevent Cuts:

- Always use a sharp knife. A dull knife requires more pressure and may slip.
- Hold the knife firmly by the handle when using. This allows for greater control. Cut away from your body.
- Always cut on a proper cutting surface. Place a damp cloth under your cutting board to prevent the board from moving.
- When chopping, keep the tip of the knife blade on or as close to the cutting board as possible.
- If a knife begins to fall, never try to catch it – step back and let it fall.
- To carry a knife: hold it by your side, firmly by the handle, tip pointing down.
- Wash knives separately and store in their proper place.

Prevent Burns:

- Always use dry oven mitts or potholders to lift hot things.
- Keep hot handles turned to the centre of the stove.
- When checking under the lid of a pot, tip the lid away from your face to allow steam to escape.
- Wear close fitting clothing and jewelry that does not dangle.
- Wear an apron to keep clothing close to your body and away from heat sources.
- Always turn off the stove and oven after using.

Prevent Fires:

- Keep flammables away from heat sources.
- Never leave cooking food unattended.
- Clean grease from stovetops and ovens.

Prevent electrical shocks:

- Never use electrical equipment near water, or with wet hands. Be sure the cord is not damaged.
- Be sure an appliance is turned off before plugging it in.
- Always hold the plug - never the cord - when unplugging.

Prevent falls:

- Pick-up dropped food and wipe up spills immediately.
- Keep work area floors clear of objects you may trip over.

Cooking Techniques for Fish

There are many ways to cook fish. The cooking techniques used in the recipes presented in this module are reviewed below.

Since fish is very delicate, it is easy to overcook fish using any of these methods. Use the following guidelines for cooking times and check for doneness to make sure fish is cooked to perfection.

Cooking Times

A general rule of thumb for cooking time is to measure the fish at the thickest part, and cook for 10 minutes per inch (2.5 cm) thickness.

Check for Doneness

Check in the centre of the fish for doneness. Fish that is cooked should turn from translucent to opaque and flake easily with a fork.

Baking

Fish fillets, steaks or whole fish are the best choices for baking. Baking is a method for cooking seafood quickly at a high temperature.

Baking requires very little or no added fat. Easy ways to keep the seafood moist during cooking include coating with seasoned breadcrumbs, lightly brushing with olive oil or melted butter, or topping with thinly sliced vegetables.

Preheat the oven to 400 F. Arrange the seafood in a single layer in a lightly oiled or buttered baking dish. If cooking fillets, fold under the thin ends so that they will cook evenly. Measure the fish at the thickest part, and cook for 10 minutes per inch (2.5 cm) thickness, or until the fish is cooked in the centre.

Broiling

Fish with a higher fat content like salmon, trout and mackerel are good choices for broiling. Broiling cooks fish very quickly at high temperature. Marinate less fattier fish before broiling to keep it moist during cooking.

Preheat the broiler. Line a broiler pan with foil and lightly oil. Place fish in a single layer on the broiler pan.

Broil the fish for half of the total cooking time. Turn and baste with the marinade to keep the fish moist. Continue broiling until cooked in the centre.

Grilling

Less delicate fish such as salmon, trout and cod are best for grilling. Fish steaks or fillets with the skin left on are less likely to fall apart on the grill.

Grilling is a low fat way of cooking with direct heat. Brush fish lightly with oil or marinate fish before placing on the grill. This will help keep fish moist and prevent it from sticking to the grill.

Fish Steaks: Marinate the steaks, or lightly brush with oil. Place directly on the grill and cook for 5-7 minutes, or until cooked.

Fish Fillets: Fillets with the skin left on one side can be cooked directly on the grill. Lightly oil the grill and the fish. Place the fish on the grill skin side down. Measure the fish at the thickest part, and grill for 10 minutes per inch (2.5 cm) thickness, or until the fish is cooked in the centre.

Thin or delicate pieces can be cooked on foil set on the grill, or wrapped in foil, lettuce leaves or corn husks before cooking.

Parchment/Foil Packages (En Papillote)

Baking fish in foil or parchment paper is known in France as *en papillote*. Since no added fat is needed, this is a low-fat way to prepare moist and flavourful fish. The fish steams in its own juices along with the vegetables that are cooked with it. A bonus of this cooking method is that it requires very little equipment and clean-up.

Delicate fish such as sole and other thin white fish work well in foil or parchment packets since this method cooks fish gently and keeps it moist. However, any fillet, steak or whole fish will work well.

To prepare packets, lay out a large sheet of foil or parchment paper (about 18 inches long). Arrange fish, vegetables and seasonings on the paper or foil. Pull the foil or paper edges together and seal into a packet. Prepare one serving packet per person.

Preheat oven to 400 F. Place the foil packets on a baking sheet and put in the oven for 15-20 minutes (depending on thickness of fish). Remove from oven and let stand for a minute. Carefully unwrap to check that the fish is cooked.

Pan frying or Sautéing

Fish fillets under 1-1/2" thick are a perfect choice for pan frying or sautéing. Sautéed fish is cooked over medium heat. The seafood is browned on one side, and is then turned over to finish cooking on the other side.

Carefully pat the fish dry. If desired, coat lightly with flour, fine cornmeal, breadcrumbs or finely chopped nuts. A coating will keep the fish crispy on the outside and moist on the inside.

Heat a small amount of oil in a non-stick fry pan over medium heat. Add the fish and cook until browned. Turn and continue cooking until the fish is browned on the other side and cooked in the centre. Cook the fish in batches rather than overcrowding the pan.

Related CFA Presentation Kits

Food Safety (2009)

Low Fat Cooking

Lesson

Each cooking session will require planning and preparation. Begin by reviewing the background information provided at the beginning of the module. Depending on group size, organize participants into two or three small groups. Each group will be responsible for the preparation of **one** fish meal. Choose the recipes and prepare “stations” for each group. At each station, include the supplies, ingredients and equipment that will be needed for the preparation of the assigned recipe(s).

Welcome and Introduction

5 minutes

- Begin this lesson by welcoming participants to the group. Introduce yourself and explain what your role will be as the group facilitator. Review the purpose of the program and the objectives of this module:

“The purpose of Cooking Basics for Adults is to help you improve your cooking skills and discover easy and tasty ways to prepare healthy foods.”

“This module will introduce easy, tasty and healthy ways to prepare fish. You will learn about the nutrition benefits and how to select and prepare fish. You will have the opportunity to practice cooking techniques as we prepare fish recipes together.”

- Warm-Up

Ask participants to introduce themselves and answer the following questions:

- What are you good at in the kitchen?
- What is one cooking/food preparation skill that you would like to work on?

Health and Nutrition Benefits of Fish

10 minutes

- Distribute Canada’s Food Guide and review the recommendations about fish:
 - Eat at least two Food Guide Servings of fish each week
 - Choose fish such as char, herring, mackerel, salmon, sardines and trout (fatter fish)

- Distribute the handout: *FISH: A Healthy and Tasty Choice* to help you review the following:
 - Health benefits of fish
 - Good sources of omega-3 fats (DHA and EPA)
 - Recommendations for reducing exposure to mercury

Selecting and Preparing Fish

10 minutes

- Ask the group what to look for when selecting fresh fish. What should fresh fish smell like? What should fresh fish look like?
- Continue to refer to the handout: *FISH: A Healthy and Tasty Choice* to help you discuss the following:
 - Tips for selecting fresh fish
 - Tips for storing fresh and frozen fish
 - Choices that support healthy oceans
- Review key principles of safe food handling of fish
 - Clean – wash hands, work area, cutting surface and utensils before and after handling raw fish
 - Chill – store fish in the refrigerator or freezer; thaw in refrigerator
 - Separate – keep raw fish separate from other foods; use separate knives and cutting boards for handling raw fish.
 - Cook – cook fish to internal temperature of 60 C (140 F). Cooked fish should flake easily with a fork and is opaque.

Review of Recipes and Techniques

10 minutes

- Discuss the cooking techniques that will be used:
 - baking (or broiling)
 - foil or parchment packets
 - pan-frying
- Introduce the recipes and review the following:
 - ingredients (explain anything unfamiliar)
 - steps involved in the recipes
 - alternate ingredients and/or cooking methods
 - helpful tips
 - tips to reduce cost (e.g. frozen or canned fish, buying fresh or frozen fish on sale, substituting less expensive varieties of fish)

Hands-on Cooking

60 minutes

- If you have not already done so, organize participants into two or three small groups. Each group will be responsible for the preparation of **one** fish meal. Note: the pesto recipe is not intended to be prepared during the session. Encourage participants to try this recipe at home.
- Review kitchen safety such as preventing cuts, burns, fires, electrical shocks and falls.
- Encourage participants to clean as they go to minimize clean-up at the end of the session.
- Visit each group throughout the hands-on cooking portion of this module. Help each group with the correct and safe preparation of the assigned recipes. Demonstrate skills and provide guidance as necessary. Some of the skills that you may need to review or demonstrate include:
 - safe handling of knives for chopping, dicing, mincing, etc.
 - safe food handling practices
 - dredging fish in preparation for pan frying
 - baking (or broiling) and pan frying
 - sealing foil (or parchment paper) packets
 - checking for doneness

Tasting

10-15 minutes

- Encourage participants to taste the recipes that were prepared. Ask participants to share their experiences. What worked well? What were the challenges? Will they try the recipe at home?

Clean Up

10-15 minutes

- Ensure that all participants help with washing dishes, cleaning the work surfaces and storing food in the proper locations.

Recipes

Recipe #1: Fish with Tomato Salsa

Recipe #2: Fish, Green Bean and Pesto Packets

Recipe #3: Breaded fish with sweet potato fingers

Notes:

- **If you have purchased frozen fish, you will need to thaw it in advance.**
- **Fish, Green Bean and Pesto Packets: due to time limitations, use store-bought pesto for this recipe or prepare pesto in advance (The Helpful Tips on this recipe includes instructions for making homemade pesto -- take some time to explain how participants can prepare homemade pesto at home.)**

RECIPE #1: Fish with Tomato Salsa

2	tomatoes, diced	2
1 cup	cucumber, diced	250 mL
¼ cup	basil, chopped	60 mL
	(or 2 tsp (10 mL) dried	
2 tsp	red wine vinegar or lime juice	10 mL
2	cloves garlic, minced	2
1 lb	fresh or frozen fish fillets	500 g
	(e.g. trout, haddock, halibut, tilapia)	
1 tbsp	olive oil	15 mL
	salt and pepper	

1. Preheat oven to 400 F.
2. Prepare tomatoes, cucumber, basil and garlic (see tips for cutting vegetables). In a large bowl, gently combine tomatoes, cucumber, basil, vinegar and garlic. Set aside.
3. Brush fish lightly with oil on both sides. Sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste. Place fish skin-side down on a greased or foil-lined baking dish. Bake for 15-20 minutes (depending on thickness) or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork and is opaque. A digital food thermometer should read 60 C (140 F).
4. Remove fish with a spatula. Serve with tomato salsa spooned over top.

Other cooking methods for this recipe

Broil: Preheat the broiler to high. Brush fish lightly with oil on both sides and season to taste. Place fish skin-side down on a broiler pan lined with foil. Broil for 4-5 minutes on each side.

Grill: Preheat grill to medium high. Brush fish lightly with oil on both sides and season to taste. Place fish on grill and cook for 4-5 minutes on each side.

Makes 4 servings.

Money Saving Tip

Most varieties of lean or medium-fat fat fish will work well for this recipe. Check your fish market or grocery store to find fish on sale. Frozen fish fillets may be a better buy. Simply thaw before cooking.

RECIPE #1: Helpful Tips

Thawing frozen fish

- Remove fish from all packaging and place on a tray or plate. Cover with plastic wrap and allow to thaw in the refrigerator for 8-10 hours.
- **Quick Thaw:** Place packaged fish in a bowl in the sink and run cold water over it. Do not use hot water. Rotate the package occasionally. Cook or refrigerate fish as soon as it is thawed.

Tips for cutting vegetables

Always wash vegetables and fruit well. Rinse under cold water and dry with a towel to prevent slipping when you cut them.

Dice or cube

- Dice or cube mean to cut vegetables into small squares. Usually dice refers to smaller pieces, and cube refers to larger pieces.
- Use two steps to dice or cube. First make all your cuts going one direction. Then turn the cutting board or the vegetables and make the crosscuts.
- A serrated knife is the best choice for cutting tomatoes.

Chop

- Chop means to cut things into small pieces. The more you chop, the smaller the pieces.
- When chopping herbs, stack several leaves on top of each other. Gently roll the stack into a bundle and slice with a sharp knife.

Mince

- Mince means to cut the food into the tiniest possible pieces.
- To mince a clove of garlic you will first need to remove the papery shell. Trim each end of the clove with a sharp knife. Then peel off the outer layer with your fingers. Chop the garlic roughly, then mince the garlic by chopping it with a rocking motion. Keep the tip of the knife on the cutting board and move the handle up and down.

RECIPE #2: Fish, Green Bean and Pesto Packets

Baking fish in foil or parchment paper is known in France as *en papillote*. This is a low-fat way to prepare moist and flavourful fish. The fish steams in its own juices along with the vegetables that are cooked with it. A bonus of this cooking method is that it requires very little equipment and clean-up.

2 cups	green beans	500 mL
2	lemons	2
4	fresh or frozen fish fillets (e.g. salmon, halibut, haddock, flounder, sole)	700 g
4 Tbsp	pesto	60 mL
4 tsp	olive oil	20 mL
	salt and pepper	

1. Preheat oven to 400 F.
2. Wash and trim the ends off green beans. Cut the lemons in half.
3. Lay out a large sheet of foil or parchment paper (about 18 inches long). Put $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of green beans in the middle of the foil or paper. Lay a fish fillet, skin side down, across the beans. Top with a tablespoon of pesto and drizzle with 1 tsp of olive oil. Squeeze the juice from one of the lemon halves and season with salt and pepper. Pull the foil or paper edges together and seal into a packet. Repeat these steps to make three more packets.

Food Safety Note: *When spooning the pesto, avoid touching the fish with the spoon to prevent cross-contamination.*

4. Place the foil packets on a baking sheet and put in the oven for 15-20 minutes (depending on thickness of fish). Remove from oven and let stand for a minute. Carefully unwrap to check that the fish is cooked. Fish should flake easily when tested with a fork and should be opaque. A digital food thermometer should read 60 C (140 F).

Makes 4 servings.

Money Saving Tip

Salmon as well as white fish such as halibut, haddock, flounder or sole will work well for this recipe. Check your fish market or grocery store to find fish on sale. Frozen fish fillets may be a better buy. Simply thaw before cooking.

RECIPE #2: Helpful Tips

Use foil or parchment paper to create fish packets.

What is Parchment Paper?

- Parchment is a paper lined with a non-stick surface. It is available at most grocery stores in rolls next to the foil and wax paper. To seal parchment paper packets, make small, tight, overlapping folds down the outside edge to close the packet.

What is Pesto?

- Pesto is a savory green sauce that is generally made with basil, garlic, pine nuts, olive oil and Parmesan cheese. Prepared pesto is available at most grocery stores but it is actually very easy to make. This recipe adds broccoli for a healthy twist on traditional pesto. Pesto freezes exceptionally well, so you can make a big batch and store it for future use.
- Use store-bought pesto for the Fish, Green Bean and Pesto Packets recipe or try this recipe at home:

Broccoli Pesto Sauce

3 cups	cut-up broccoli florets and stems	750 mL
2	cloves garlic	2
1/3 cup	pine nuts	75 mL
3 Tbsp	olive oil	45 mL
¼ cup	chopped fresh basil or 1 Tbsp (15 mL) dried basil	50 mL
1/3 cup	grated Parmesan cheese	75 mL

1. In medium saucepan, cook broccoli in boiling water 4 to 5 minutes or until crisp-tender; drain and cool. In a food processor or blender, combine broccoli, garlic, pine nuts, oil and basil. Process until coarsely chopped. Add cheese; process until well mixed.

Makes 2-1/2 cups (625 mL)

RECIPE #3: Breaded fish with sweet potato fingers

Breaded Fish

Pan frying fish is a delicious way to cook non-fatty fish like tilapia, sole, haddock or perch. The coating helps keep the fish moist while providing a browned and crispy crust. Pan frying avoids the large amount of oil required for deep frying.

4	fresh or frozen thin (1 inch (2.5 cm)) white fish fillets	700g
	salt and pepper	
¼ cup	all purpose flour	60 mL
2	eggs	2
½ cup	bread crumbs	125 mL
2 Tbsp	olive oil	30 mL

1. Pat-dry the fish fillets. Season with salt and pepper.
2. Prepare 3 shallow dishes. Put the flour in one dish. Put the eggs in the second dish and beat lightly. Put the bread crumbs in the third dish. Dip one piece of fish at a time, first in the flour, then in the egg. Let the excess egg drip off before coating the fish in the bread crumbs. Turn the fish to coat both sides with bread crumbs.
3. Heat the oil in a frying pan over medium heat. Add fillets to pan, being sure to leave space between fillets. Sauté the fish 3-5 minutes on each side, until the bread crumb coating becomes golden-coloured and fish flakes easily when tested with a fork and is opaque. A digital food thermometer should read 60 C (140 F).

Makes 4 servings.

Tip:

You can greatly reduce the need to rinse off your hands in the middle of the breading process if you use one hand for the "wet" ingredients and the other for "dry" ingredients.

Types of fish to try in this recipe:

- Flounder
- Halibut
- Mahi-mahi
- Perch
- Pickerel
- Snapper
- Sole
- White fish
- Whiting

Sweet Potato Fingers

3	small sweet potatoes (unpeeled)	3
1 tbsp	olive oil	15 mL
	salt and pepper	

1. Preheat oven to 400 F.
2. Cut potatoes in half lengthwise. Cut each half into 4 to 6 “fingers”.
3. Place in a large bowl and toss with oil and salt and pepper to coat evening.
4. Arrange in a single layer on a baking sheet. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, turning once, or until tender and beginning to brown.

Tips for safe chopping:

Use a large sharp knife. Slice the sweet potato in half length-wise, then lay the flat side down. Cut 3-4 pieces lengthwise again, then flip those on their sides to cut again if they are too thick. Always cut away from yourself.

Seasoning ideas:

Instead of seasoning with salt and pepper, try these seasoning ideas for sweet potato fingers:

- Paprika
- Garlic powder
- Onion powder
- Cajun seasoning
- Ground cumin
- Red pepper flakes
- Cayenne pepper

Makes 36 “fingers”

Adapted and reprinted with permission from Foodland Ontario
www.foodland.gov.on.ca

HANDOUTS

FISH: A Healthy and Tasty Choice

- Canada's Food Guide recommends that Canadians eat at least two Food Guide Servings of fish each week. This is 150 grams (5 oz) of fish each week – about the size of two decks of cards or 1 cup.
- There are many health benefits of eating fish more often:
 - Excellent source of protein that is low in fat
 - Lower risk of heart attack and stroke
 - Healthy eyes and nervous system
 - Role in brain development in infants
 - May reduce the risk of certain cancers
- Fish contain omega-3 fats. Omega 3 fats are healthy fats with many health benefits for adults and children.
- There are three types of omega-3 fats:
 - ALA (alpha-linolenic acid)
 - EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid)
 - DHA (docosahexaenoic acid)
- All fish contain at least some omega-3 fats (DHA and EPA). Choose fatty fish which are higher in omega-3 fats more often (see list below).
- For the greatest health benefits, fish should be prepared using lower fat cooking methods such as steaming, grilling, baking or lightly pan-frying.
- Other foods contain a type of omega-3 fat called ALA (alpha-linolenic acid). ALA has some of the same health benefits as DHA and EPA.

DHA and EPA

- Salmon
- Trout
- Mackerel
- Sardines
- Herring
- Anchovies
- Arctic char
- DHA-enriched eggs
- DHA-enriched milk
- DHA-enriched margarine

ALA

- ground flaxseed and flaxseed oil
- canola oil
- soybean oil
- soy products (e.g. soy beverage, tofu, soybeans)
- walnuts

Fish and Mercury

There are certain types of fish that should be limited due to high levels of mercury. Because mercury affects the developing brain, it is especially important for women that may become pregnant, are pregnant or breastfeeding, as well as young children to limit their exposure to mercury.

Limit high mercury fish (fresh/frozen):

- Albacore “white” tuna
(light tuna e.g. skipjack, yellowfin or tongol has less mercury)
- Shark
- Swordfish
- Marlin
- Orange roughy
- Escolar

General Population: 150 g per week

Women who are or may become pregnant or who are breastfeeding: 150 g per month

Children 5-11 years old: 125 g per month

Children 1-4 years old: 75 g per month

Tips for selecting fresh fish:

1. Smell it. Fresh fish should smell sweet. Fishy or strong odours means the fish is past its prime.
2. Look at it. Whole fish should look like it was just caught. Look for bright eyes and firm flesh. Fish fillets or steaks should be firm and bright looking, with no brown spots or discolouration.
3. Store fresh fish in the refrigerator and use it within one to two days. Otherwise, wrap it tightly and freeze it.

Frozen fish

Frozen fish is a convenient and often less expensive choice. Store fish in the freezer up to 4-6 months.

Canned fish

Canned fish is a convenient less expensive choice. Canned salmon and tuna is already cooked - just drain the liquids. Mash up the bones in canned salmon for a good source of calcium. Once opened, remove fish from the can, store in an air tight container in the fridge and use within 3-4 days.

Choices that support healthy oceans

Support responsible fishing practices by choosing fish that are caught or farmed in environmentally sustainable ways. This helps ensure that enough fish will remain in our oceans for years to come. To help you make responsible seafood choices go to www.seachoice.org.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide

www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide

SeaChoice.org for healthy oceans (Canada's Seafood Guide)

www.seachoice.org

Guide to Eating Sport Fish in Ontario

www.ene.gov.on.ca/environment/en/resources/collection/guide_to_eating_ontario_sport_fish/index.htm

Foodland Ontario

www.foodland.gov.on.ca

EatRight Ontario

www.eatrightontario.ca

or call toll-free to speak to a Registered Dietitian 1-877-510-510-2