

# Seafood Smarts

A DIVE INTO BENEFITS FOR KIDS



**The benefits of seafood for kids are big!<sup>1</sup> Fish and shellfish supply the nutrients, vitamins and omega-3s essential for strong bones, brain development, and healthy heart and immune system.**

Protein, vitamins B-6, B-12 and D, and omega-3 fatty acids (especially DHA and EPA) are key nutrients found in seafood that promote healthy growth and development throughout childhood, and can help minimize chronic disease risk later in life.

Despite everything we know about the importance of seafood for growing minds, overall, kids are only getting about 40% of the omega-3s EPA+DHA recommended by the National Academy of Medicine.<sup>2</sup>

- **BIG BRAINS:** Fish makes your brain bigger, literally!<sup>3</sup> Your brain is nearly 60% fat,<sup>4</sup> and omega-3 fatty acids found in seafood are among the most crucial molecules that determine your brain's ability to perform.
- **BETTER GRADES:** Kids who eat fish at least once per week may do better in school.<sup>5</sup> Seafood's omega-3s help your kids' brains develop, leading to higher IQs and improved reading and spelling skills.<sup>6</sup>

Research shows that kids who eat fish at least once a week sleep better and have an IQ about 4.8 points higher than those who seldom or never eat fish.<sup>7</sup>

- **HEALTHY EYES:** Along with supporting healthy eye development, seafood's omega-3s support our ability to detect light. Nearly half of our eye's light-detecting cell structure are made up of omega-3s.<sup>8</sup>
- **STRONG BONES:** Fish – especially salmon – is naturally packed with Vitamin D, a bone-strengthening nutrient that is naturally present in very few foods. Fish has more vitamin B12 and vitamin D than any other type of food.<sup>9</sup> D is necessary for building bones and teeth and assisting in the absorption of calcium.

Seafood is an excellent source of lean protein, essential for a child's body development especially during times of rapid growth. Protein is found in every cell in your body and is necessary for the continuous repair and growth of tissues including bone, skin and muscles.

- **LESS STRESS:** Children who consume more seafood have less anxiety and better focus. Omega-3s have been shown to help reduce behavior problems and aggression in children – and their parents.<sup>10</sup>
- **BREATHE WELL:** Want fewer sick days? Research shows that omega-3 DHA improved children's immune responses and kids have a lower risk of some allergic diseases and upper respiratory infections.<sup>1</sup>

Fish twice a week may help reduce asthma symptoms in children,<sup>11</sup> a disease affecting 1 in 12 kids in the U.S., according to the CDC.



For more ways to increase your seafood intake, visit our website or follow us on social media.

[f](#) [@](#) [t](#) [p](#) @Seafood4Health | #Seafood2xWk

For citations, visit [seafoodnutrition.org/seafoodsmarts](http://seafoodnutrition.org/seafoodsmarts)