The Health Benefits of Eating Seafood as Part of a Healthy Diet

Seafood is a highly nutritious food and is a good source of protein. The table overleaf lists some of the benefits of the nutrients found in common New Zealand seafood species.

SEAFOOD NEW ZEALAND

Beneficial Nutrients and Minerals in Seafood	Health Benefits Provided	Examples of New Zealand Species that are Good Sources* and Sources** of Beneficial Nutrients
Iodine	• Necessary for the production of thyroid hormones, for normal neurological function and for normal energy metabolism • Contributes to growth and development of children • Contributes to normal cognitive function	**Good sources: Bluff oysters, Greenshell™ mussels, hapuka, Pacific oysters, pipi** Sources: Albacore tuna, alfonsino, arrow squid, black oreo, blue cod, blue moki, blue warehou, bluenose, butterfish, gemfish, grey mullet, gurnard, hake, Jack mackerel, John dory, kahawai, kingfish, lemon sole, ling, monkfish (stargazer), orange roughy, red cod, snapper, southern blue whiting, tarakihi, trevally, yellowbelly flounder
Iron	• Necessary for normal oxygen transport, immune system function and for normal neurological development in the foetus • Contributes to energy production and the reduction of tiredness and fatigue • Contributes to cognitive function	**Good sources: Greenshell™ mussels, Pacific oysters** Source: Butterfish, Jack mackerel, kahawai, orange roughy, trevally
Magnesium	• Necessary for normal electrolyte balance, nerve and muscle function • Necessary for teeth and bone structure • Contributes to normal energy metabolism	**Good sources: Pacific oyster, pipi** Sources: Albacore tuna, arrow squid, blue cod, blue moki, Bluff Oyster, butterfish, Greenshell™ mussels, lemon sole, ling, snapper, southern blue whiting, yellowbelly flounder
Manganese	• Contributes to normal bone formation and energy metabolism • Contributes to protection from free radical damage • Contributes to growth and development of children	Source: Pacific oysters
Niacin / Vitamin B3	• Necessary for normal neurological function and the release of energy from food • Contributes to the reduction of tiredness and fatigue and to normal psychological function	**Good sources: Arrow squid, black oreo, blue cod, butterfish, Bluff oyster, bluenose, gemfish, Greenshell™ mussels, grey mullet, hake, hapuka, monkfish (stargazer), Pacific oysters, pipi, red cod, snapper, southern blue whiting, yellowbelly flounder**
Omega-3 fatty acid***	• Contributes to heart health	**Good sources: Albacore tuna, alfonsino, arrow squid, black oreo, blue cod, blue moki, butterfish, gemfish, Greenshell™ mussels, grey mullet, hake, hapuka, hoki, John dory, kahawai, King salmon, lemon sole, ling, orange roughy, red gurnard, rig, snapper, tarakihi, trevally**
Phosphorous	• Necessary for normal teeth, bone and cell membrane structure and for energy metabolism • Contributes to the growth and development of children	**Good sources: Albacore tuna, grey mullet, kingfish, ling, rig, snapper, yellowbelly founder** Sources: Alfonsino, arrow squid, black oreo, blue cod, blue moki, blue warehou, bluenose, Bluff oyster, butterfish, gemfish, Greenshell™ mussels, gurnard, hake, hapuka, hoki, Jack mackerel, John dory, kahawai, kingfish, King salmon, monkfish (stargazer), orange roughy, Pacific oysters, pipi, red cod, southern blue whiting, tarakihi, trevally

The Recommended Dietary Intake (RDI) is considered to be the average daily dietary intake level that is sufficient to meet the nutrient requirements of nearly all (97–98%) healthy individuals in a particular life stage and gender group. *In New Zealand, to qualify as a Good Source of a nutrient the food must contain at least 25% of Recommended Dietary Intake (RDI). **A Source must contain at least 10% of the Recommended Dietary Intake (RDI). ***To qualify as a Good Source of Omega-3 fatty acid the food must contain no less than 60 mg of eicosapentaenoic acid and docosahexaenoic acid per serving. To qualify as a Source of Omega-3 fatty acid, the food must contain 200 mg alpha-linolenic acid or 30 mg total of eicosapentaenoic acid and docosahexaenoic acid per serving.

Beneficial Nutrients and Minerals in Seafood	Health Benefits Provided	Examples of New Zealand Species that are Good Sources* and Sources** of Beneficial Nutrients
Potassium	• Necessary for water and electrolyte balance • Contributes to the functioning of the nervous system and normal muscle function • Contributes to the growth and development of children	Sources: Albacore tuna, alfonsino, arrow squid, black oreo, blue moki, blue warehou, bluenose, Bluff oyster, butterfish, gemfish, Greenshell™ mussels, grey mullet, gurnard, hake, hapuka, hoki, Jack mackerel, John dory, kahawai, kingfish, King salmon, lemon sole, monkfish (stargazer), orange roughy, red cod, rig, snapper, tarakihi, trevally, yellowbelly flounder
Protein	• Necessary for tissue building and repair, normal growth and development of bone in children and adolescents aged four years and over • Contributes to growth and maintenance of muscle mass	**All seafood species are a good source of protein**
Selenium	• Necessary for normal immune system function and for the production of thyroid hormones • Contributes to the maintenance of hair and nails • Necessary for cell protection from some types of free radical damage • Contributes to sperm production	**Good sources: Albacore tuna, alfonsino, arrow squid, black oreo, blue cod, blue moki, blue warehou, gemfish, grey mullet, gurnard, hake, hoki, Jack mackerel, John dory, kahawai, kingfish, lemon sole, ling, orange roughy, pipi, rig, snapper, tarakihi, trevally** Sources: Butterfish, King salmon, yellowbelly flounder
Vitamins A and E (anti-oxidants)	**Vitamin A** • Necessary for normal vision and the structure and function of skin and mucous membranes **Vitamin E** • Contributes to the protection of cells from free radical damage and to the normal growth and development of children	**Good sources: King salmon (Vitamin E)** Sources: Arrow squid (Vitamin E), pipi (Vitamin A)

Try Beetroot-cured kahawai gravlax bagels, from *Zak and Tamar's Fishy Bits*, for good sources of Omega-3 fatty acids, Phosphorous, Selenium, Vitamin B12 and Vitamin D.

Scan for this and other easy and tasty recipes from Seafood New Zealand

The Recommended Dietary Intake (RDI) is considered to be the average daily dietary intake level that is sufficient to meet the nutrient requirements of nearly all (97–98%) healthy individuals in a particular life stage and gender group. *In New Zealand, to qualify as a Good Source of a nutrient the food must contain at least 25% of Recommended Dietary Intake (RDI). **A Source must contain at least 10% of the Recommended Dietary Intake (RDI). ***To qualify as a Good Source of Omega-3 fatty acid the food must contain no less than 60 mg of eicosapentaenoic acid and docosahexaenoic acid per serving. To qualify as a Source of Omega-3 fatty acid, the food must contain 200 mg alpha-linolenic acid or 30 mg total of eicosapentaenoic acid and docosahexaenoic acid per serving.

Beneficial Nutrients and Minerals in Seafood	Health Benefits Provided	Examples of New Zealand Species that are Good Sources* and Sources** of Beneficial Nutrients
Vitamin B12	• Necessary for normal neurological function and it contributes to blood formation and energy metabolism • Contributes to psychological function and immune system function • Contributes to the growth and development of children	**Good sources: Albacore tuna, alfonsino, arrow squid, blue cod, blue moki, blue warehou, bluenose, Bluff oysters, butterfish, gemfish, Greenshell™ mussels, grey mullet, gurnard, hake, hapuka, hoki, Jack mackerel, John dory, kahawai, kingfish, King salmon, lemon sole, ling, monkfish (stargazer), Pacific oysters, pipi, red cod, rig, snapper, southern blue whiting, tarakihi, trevally, yellowbelly flounder** Sources: Black oreo, orange roughy
Vitamin C	• Necessary for normal connective tissue, blood vessel structure and normal neurological function • Contributes to iron absorption from food • Contributes to collagen formation • Contributes to immune system function	**Good sources: Bluff oyster, Pacific oyster** Sources: Arrow squid
Vitamin D	• Necessary for normal bone structure and the utilisation of calcium and phosphorus • Contributes to the maintenance of normal teeth • Contributes to muscle function and the immune system function	**Good sources: Albacore tuna, alfonsino, blue moki, blue warehou, gemfish, Jack mackerel, kahawai, orange roughy, trevally** Sources: Bluff oysters, grey mullet, kingfish, Pacific oysters, southern blue whiting, tarakihi
Zinc	• Necessary for normal immune system function • Contributes to normal skin structure and the healing of wounds • Contributes to fertility and reproduction • Contributes to the maintenance of normal vision	**Good sources: Bluff oyster, Pacific oyster** Sources: Rock lobster

Disclaimer: The nutrients found in seafood vary based on species, the environment where it was caught and cooking method – frying food is not recommended for maximum nutritional benefit. Talk to your health professional about nutrition decisions that are right for you.

For more information about the nutritional benefits of eating seafood, as well as species found in this guide, visit **seafood.co.nz**

SEAFOOD NEW ZEALAND