

# Salmon

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Salmon is classified as an oily fish and is probably best known for being an excellent source of omega 3 essential fats, including eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA). Omega 3 fats are needed for good health and are called “essential” because we cannot make them ourselves. Therefore we have to get them from our diet, and oily fish is the best food source. The omega 3 fats are important for healthy skin, strong immunity and balanced hormones. They have also been shown to have a beneficial effect on cholesterol levels, heart health, allergies and joint problems such as arthritis. They are crucial for optimal brain function and deficiency can lead to mental health problems. Babies and young children need DHA in particular for their brain and nervous system development. Wild salmon tends to be higher in omega 3 fats than farmed salmon.

Salmon is also a very good source of easily digestible protein which is important for growth, repair, and basically all functions of our bodies.

But salmon is also very rich in vitamins and minerals, in particular B vitamins which are essential for energy production, selenium and iodine which are important for a healthy thyroid, magnesium which helps us relax and keep our blood sugar levels even.



And last but not least oily fish including salmon is the only rich food source of vitamin D. Whilst for a long time vitamin D was only known for its importance in calcium metabolism and bone health research over the past ten years or so has linked vitamin D deficiency to many disorders from autoimmune diseases to cancer and depression to diabetes, the list keeps growing. So during winter when we do not make any vitamin D ourselves due to the low sun exposure, dietary intake may become even more important.

So salmon, as well as other oily fish, are a great source of many essential nutrients and should be part of a healthy balanced diet. There are of course two downsides to fish. 1. Fish, and oily fish in particular, can contain certain contaminants. The Food Standards Agency therefore recommends to limit the portions of oily fish per week to four everyone except for pregnant women and girls and women who may have children in the future who should limit intake to two portions per week. It is also advised to eat a good variety of fish. 2. There are a lot of concerns over over-fishing and sustainability. So choose responsibly produced/caught fish. See [www.fishonline.org](http://www.fishonline.org) for more information.

The easiest and quickest way to cook salmon is to steam, poach or grill salmon filets which only takes around 20 minutes (depending on size). Serve with a few new potatoes and green vegetables and you have a quick, easy and nutritious meal. See below for some more ideas.

## Salmon and Avocado Wrap

*This wrap will make a nice difference to the usual ham or cheese sandwich, although admittedly, it takes a bit longer to prepare. You could use some left over salmon from last night's dinner of course to make it a quick wrap or sandwich filler.*

Serves 2

150g salmon, poached in half milk/half water with added peppercorns and dill  
1 avocado  
2 tbsp Greek yoghurt  
Juice of ½ lime  
1 tbsp fresh dill, chopped  
Pepper to taste  
2 wraps

Mash avocado with lime juice, yoghurt, dill and pepper. Flake salmon, mix with avocado mash and spread on the wrap and roll up.

## Fish Chowder

*A wonderfully warming and nutritious chowder. This chowder can of course also be made with other types of fish.*

Serves 4

1tblsp of coconut oil  
1 medium onion  
2 cloves of garlic  
2-3 stalks of celery  
2 medium carrots, coarsely grated  
1 heaped tsp of curry powder  
1 tin of chopped tomatoes  
1 litre of boiling water or fish stock  
2 bay leaves  
300g skinless and boneless salmon  
300g skinless and boneless cod  
200g quinoa  
1 tbsp lemon juice  
Pepper and salt to taste  
Crème fraiche to serve

Finely chop onions, garlic and celery. Gently fry onions, garlic and celery in coconut oil until they are softening. Add curry powder and fry for another minute. Add tin of tomatoes, water, bay leaves, fish and quinoa.

After approximately 10 minutes add the carrots. Cook for another 10 minutes or until the fish is cooked through and quinoa is done. Season with pepper and salt and serve with a dollop of crème fraiche.

## Fishcakes

*This is a much more nutritious and yummy alternative to fish fingers and a great way to introduce fish to children. But adults will love it too. Serve with tomato sauce and green vegetables. For a quick store cupboard meal you could use tinned salmon which would have the added bonus of being high in calcium as the small bones are still in there, it doesn't taste quite as nice though.*

*Serves 4*

600g salmon, poached in half milk/half water with added peppercorns and dill  
400g potatoes or half potatoes, half sweet potatoes  
2 tbsp fresh dill  
Pepper to taste  
50g breadcrumbs

Boil the potatoes in skin, peel and mash. Mix in salmon and dill and season to taste.

Shape into eight cakes and coat with the breadcrumbs. Place under medium grill and grill for about 5 minutes on each side until the fishcakes turn golden and are heated through.

## Broccoli and Salmon Salad

*This is a delicious and nutritious winter salad. Serve with some wholemeal bread or a couple of new potatoes.*

*Serves 4*

400g broccoli, cut into florets  
400g salmon filets  
100g natural yoghurt  
2 tsp lemon juice  
½ tsp sugar  
2 tbsp fresh dill  
Pepper to taste  
4 tbsp flaked almonds, toasted

Steam broccoli for 6-7 minutes, it should still have some bite.

Grill salmon for 4-5 minutes on both sides until cooked through.

Mix the yoghurt with the lemon juice, sugar and dill and season to taste.

Carefully mix the broccoli, salmon and dressing, taking care the salmon does not disintegrate too much. Sprinkle with the flaked almonds and serve.