



ARCTIC GRAYLING

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH – CONTAMINANTS FACT SHEETS



WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT ARCTIC GRAYLING?

Arctic grayling has a dark blue coloring, with pink and purple tones. They are found throughout the NWT, and are commonly found at the mouth of cold rivers. Arctic grayling is also known as bluefish.

Arctic grayling, like most other fish species, often contains some mercury. Mercury is a heavy metal contaminant (*see Mercury fact sheet* - <http://www.hss.gov.nt.ca>) that can build up in the organs and in the meat.

Arctic grayling eat insects, crustaceans and fish eggs. Arctic grayling do not normally eat other fish unless they grow to large sizes. Fish that do not eat other fish tend to have lower levels of mercury.

ARCTIC GRAYLING IS GOOD FOR US!

Arctic grayling is an excellent source of protein. Protein is needed to build and repair all parts of the body.

Arctic grayling meat is also an excellent source of magnesium and selenium, two minerals that are essential to the body. Magnesium helps the body use the energy that is in food. It is also important for bone health. Selenium helps to protect the body from damage that occurs over time,

called oxidative stress. Oxidative stress is unavoidable and is a natural part of how the body works, which is why we need this important mineral.

For more nutritional information on fish, see the GNWT Health and Social Services Nutritional Food Fact Sheets Series (<http://www.hss.gov.nt.ca>).

IS ARCTIC GRAYLING SAFE TO EAT?

Yes! Arctic grayling is safe to eat. It is also one of the healthiest foods available. The benefits of consuming arctic grayling are much greater than the risks of contaminant

exposure. A consumption notice has never been issued by the NWT's Chief Public Health Officer to limit the intake of Arctic grayling.