

New concerns raised about tuna imports

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A U.S. study released this week is raising new concerns about the safety of imported, canned tuna -- the most popular fish in the United States.

The report says some imported tuna contains far higher levels of toxic mercury than indicated by U.S. Food and Drug Administration warnings, The Christian Science Monitor reported Wednesday.

The researchers from the environmental group Defenders of Wildlife, the non-profit Center for Science in the Public Interest and the Mercury Policy Project said among 144 cans of mostly foreign brand "light tuna" taken from grocery store shelves nationwide, the average mercury content was 0.269 parts per million -- far above the FDA's cutoff for fish deemed "low-mercury," The Monitor said.

The study recommends a reassessment of mercury in canned tuna and closer examination of imports, along with revised FDA guidelines.

"What we've found is that the government is not enforcing its own standards and very high-mercury containing fish is sold all the time in the United States," said Caroline Smith DeWaal of the Center for Science in the Public Interest told the newspaper.

Tuna industry and FDA officials declined comment.

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