

For the Farm Wife and Family



By Mrs. Richard C. Spence, Food Editor

FISHY FACTS



SPENCE

Let's have fish for dinner. It's one of the most delicious and economical protein foods you can buy. Fish is easy to digest because it has few connective tissues, and weight-watchers will find calorie-shy fish a real boon. It's simple to prepare, but be careful not to cook it too long. Unlike raw meat, seafoods are tender and juicy in their fresh state. Cooking simply brings out flavor and thickens the protein. Fish protein is much like egg white; if over-cooked, the protein loses water, shrinks and becomes tough and rubbery. Cooking is complete when the juice and flesh turn whitish and the flesh can be easily flaked from the bone.

Fish can be broiled, fried, baked, poached and steamed; with such a variety, how can you have a dull menu?

Broil fish about six inches from the heat source; don't turn the fish unless it's quite large and thick. Panfrying is best done with a few pieces of fish at a time. One popular method is to dip the fish in flour, then into a milk and egg mixture, then into bread crumbs and finally into a buttered skillet. Finished pieces can be kept warm in a turned-off oven.

You don't need large quantities of fat for deep fat frying fish. Oil is ready when a bread crumb is browned in 30 seconds. If the oil smokes, you know it's too hot and the fish won't cook properly.

Bake fish in a hot oven, 400-500 degrees. If the fish is stuffed, allow 10-12 minutes per pound baking time. Adding some liquid to the bottom of the pan will

keep the fish moist. When poaching fish, bring fish to a gentle boil and then allow it to simmer 3-6 minutes per pound. Fish can be poached with salted water, milk, or bouillon.

The cooking method will depend on the fat or lean-ness of the fish. Fat fish, such as swordfish, salmon, and mackerel, have fat mingled throughout the flesh.

Lean fish, such as flounder, haddock, and perch, store fat in the liver leaving the flesh dry. While almost any kind of fish can be successfully fried or broiled, fat fish do well baked and lean fish are excellent in stews and chowders.

When buying fresh fish, check to see that the flesh is firm and does not separate from the bones. Skin should be shiny and not

ined. Fish directly from the water has very little odor; so if the fish you're buying has a strong disagreeable odor, it's probably too old. Fish eyes should be bright and full; sunken eyes indicate staleness.

Refrigerate fresh fish products in their original wrapper as soon as possible. Don't keep fresh fish longer than a day or two before cooking.

When you select frozen fish, make sure it is solidly frozen and without odors. Fish should be wrapped in moisture proof material with little or no air space between the fish and wrapper. Keep frozen fish solidly frozen until you're ready to use them; never thaw and refreeze fish. Freezer storage is a convenient way to keep fish, but don't store too long if you want to preserve the best flavor. Date packages as they are frozen and keep them no longer than 6 months. The safest way to thaw fish is in the refrigerator. Never thaw fish at room temperature or in warm water.

LEMON POACHED FISH

- 1 pound sliced fresh halibut (or fresh cod, fresh salmon, fresh perch, fresh bass)
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

Cut fish into individual sized servings. Put enough water in a pan to barely cover fish, add lemon juice, and bring to a boil. Place the fish in the water, cover, and cook below boiling point for 8 to 10 minutes. Carefully remove fish from water and serve immediately with your favorite Hollandaise Sauce.

TARTAR BROILED FISH STICKS

- 1 package (8 or 9 oz.) frozen breaded fish sticks

- 2 teaspoons instant minced onions
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
- 1 1/2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1/4 cup dairy sour cream
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup sliced pimiento-stuffed olives
- 1 tablespoon sweet-pickle relish

Broil fish sticks following package directions. Meanwhile, soften onions in mixture of lemon peel and juice; combine with remaining ingredients. Spoon mixture over each broiled fish stick; return to broiler an additional 3 to 4 minutes until bubbly. Serve at once. 2 to 3 servings.

HEARTY SLAW FISHWICHES

- 1 package (9 oz.) frozen breaded fish sticks
- 1 package (1 lb.) frozen French fried potatoes, (optional)
- 6 large French rolls
- 3 cups shredded cabbage
- 1/2 teaspoon grated lemon peel
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper

Place fish sticks and potatoes in shallow pan; heat in oven following package directions. Meanwhile, split rolls lengthwise about 1/2 from the top; partially hollow out bottoms of rolls. Place in oven to heat a few minutes before fish sticks are done. Combine cabbage with remaining ingredients; place a generous

spoonful of slaw in hollow of each warmed roll. Add 2 fish sticks and sprinkle with additional slaw if desired. Cover with remaining slaw and tops of rolls. Serve with French fries, lemon wedges, pickles and catsup, if desired. 6 servings.

SWEET AND SOUR QUICKIE FISH STICKS

- 1 package (8 or 9 oz.) frozen breaded fish sticks
- 1 cup thinly sliced celery
- 1/2 cup chopped green pepper
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 to 2 tablespoons salad oil
- 1 tablespoon flour
- 1 can (8 oz.) tomato sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon grated lemon peel
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons firmly packed brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons soy sauce

Heat fish sticks in ungreased covered skillet, until hot, turning once. Place on bed of steamed rice; keep warm in low oven. In same pan, lightly saute celery, pepper and onion in oil until heated, but still crisp. Sprinkle with flour, stirring quickly to blend evenly; add mixture of tomato sauce and remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly; boil 2 minutes. Pour over fish sticks and sprinkle with sesame seeds, if desired.

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