

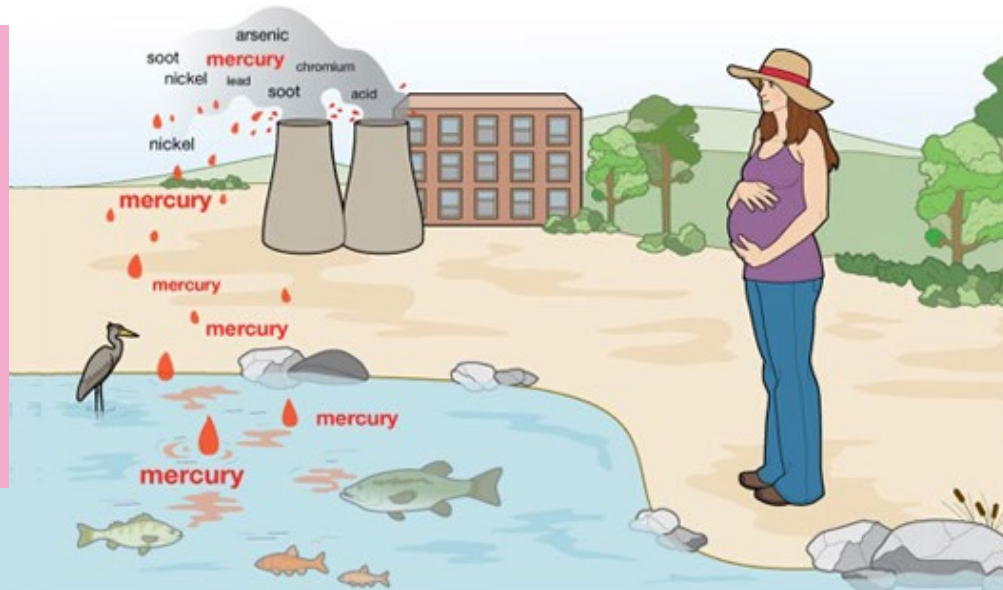
# HOW MERCURY POISONING WORKS

*EVER WONDER WHY PREGNANT WOMEN ARE ADVISED TO CUT DOWN ON EATING TUNA? TUNA, LIKE OTHER LARGE FISH, IS CONTAMINATED WITH MERCURY, WHICH IS A POTENT NEUROTOXIN. OVER 400,000 NEWBORNS ARE AFFECTED BY MERCURY POLLUTION EVERY YEAR. BUT HOW DID THE MERCURY GET INTO THE TUNA—AND OTHER FISH—IN THE FIRST PLACE?*

**COAL-FIRED POWER PLANTS ARE THE LARGEST SOURCE OF TOXIC MERCURY; THEY EMIT 42% OF ALL HUMAN-CAUSED MERCURY POLLUTION IN THE UNITED STATES.**

**WHEN A COAL SMOKESTACK IS NOT FILTERED, MERCURY AND OTHER POISONS—ARSENIC, LEAD, NICKEL, CHROMIUM AND ACID GASES—ARE RELEASED INTO THE AIR.**

**THAT MERCURY DRIFTS THROUGH THE AIR ACROSS THE GLOBE—AND RAINS DOWN INTO RESERVOIRS,**



**EVERY STATE IN THE COUNTRY HAS ISSUED A FISH ADVISORY BECAUSE OF UNSAFE MERCURY CONTAMINATION.**

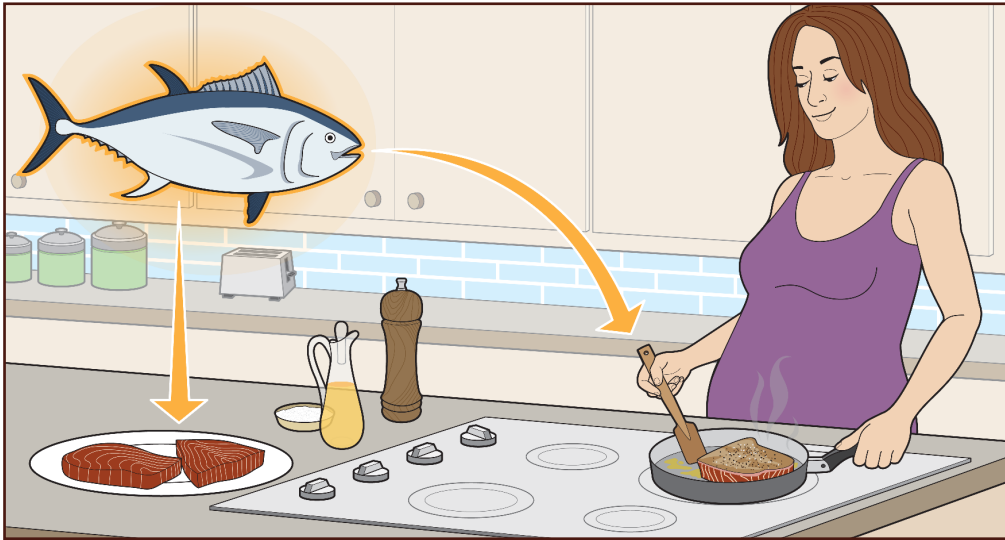
**MICROORGANISMS IN THE WATER CONVERT THE MERCURY TO A HIGHLY TOXIC FORM, CALLED METHYLMERCURY.**

**THAT BACTERIA MAKES THE MERCURY "BIO-AVAILABLE"—ABLE TO BE TAKEN UP BY FISH THAT CONSUME IT.**

**METHYLMERCURY IS ABSORBED BY FISH THROUGH THEIR GILLS AND DISPERSED THROUGH THEIR BODIES.**

**IT ACCUMULATES IN FATTY TISSUE.**

# HOW MERCURY POISONING WORKS



**CONTAMINATED FISH IS EATEN BY OTHER FISH, BIRDS AND MAMMALS – INCLUDING HUMANS.**

**TYPICALLY, THE LONGER A FISH LIVES, AND THE LARGER IT IS, THE MORE MERCURY ACCUMULATES IN ITS FLESH.**

**BLUEFISH, GROUPER, KING MACKEREL, MARLIN, ORANGE ROUGHY, SHARK, SWORDFISH, AND TUNA (BIGEYE AND AHI) ALL CONTAIN HIGH LEVELS OF MERCURY.**

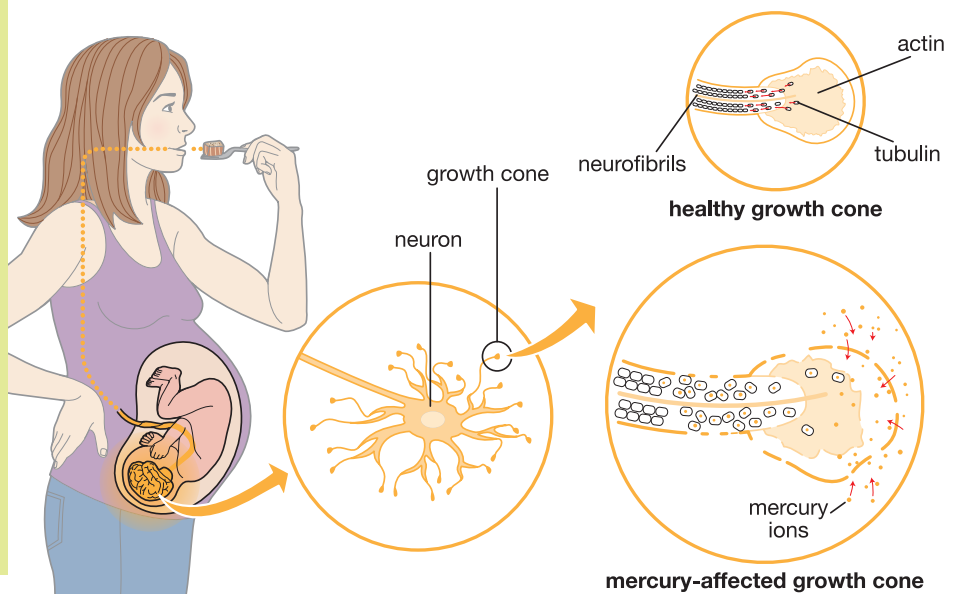
**ONCE WE EAT CONTAMINATED FISH, METHYLMERCURY GOES DIRECTLY INTO THE ORGANS THAT HAVE THE MOST FATS, WHERE IT ACCUMULATES.**

**BREASTS: MERCURY IS FOUND IN BREAST MILK.**

**BRAINS: METHYLMERCURY IS ABLE TO BREACH THE BLOOD-BRAIN BARRIER.**

**UMBILICAL CORD: METHYLMERCURY REACHES THE FETUS AND THE BABY'S DEVELOPING BRAIN.**

**FETUSES AND YOUNG CHILDREN ARE ESPECIALLY VULNERABLE TO POISON, WHICH CAUSES CAUSES BRAIN NEURON DEGENERATION AND IMPAIRS LEARNING AND GROWTH.**



## HELP US TELL POLLUTERS TO CLEAN UP THEIR COAL PLANTS

**MERCURY POISONING FROM COAL PLANTS CAN BE PREVENTED BY INSTALLING SCRUBBERS TO REDUCE MERCURY EMISSIONS.**

**IN 2012, EPA ANNOUNCED THE FIRST NATIONAL STANDARDS REGULATING MERCURY POLLUTION FROM COAL FIRED POWER PLANTS. THESE REGULATIONS THAT PROTECT US FROM THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF COAL FIRED POWER PLANTS ARE UNDER ATTACK.**

UPDATED: SEPTEMBER 2018 SOURCES: MOMSCLEANAIRFORCE.COM/MERCURY-SOURCES