

**“Communicating Nutrition and Food Safety Risks:
Methyl Mercury, E.coli, Oh my!”**

April 6, 2008, 3-5 pm

Session Goals / Objectives:

After this two hour session, attendees will have a working knowledge of how to apply core risk communication principles in a practical manner to address current and emerging nutrition and food safety issues. Participants will also learn why a practical approach to risk communication is necessary when informing the public about critical nutrition and food safety related issues. Attendees will learn first hand from knowledgeable risk communicators, how to apply these practical applications in number of food related settings.

Part 1: Panel Discussion

Moderator: Nancy Wellman, PhD, RD, ASN Public Information Committee

Panelists: Elizabeth Cohen, Medical Correspondent, CNN

Christine Bruhn, PhD, Director, Center for Consumer Research, UC Davis, (Also serves on the [FDA Risk Communication Advisory Committee](#))

Topics to be explored:

Using current examples such as the FDA/EPA guidance on fish consumption and trans fat and heat-formed compounds in food, this expert panel will explore the challenges of communicating about emerging nutrition and food safety issues with the public. The panel will also provide a practical approach to risk communication for attendees to use as a guide.

Questions for consideration:

- What are the overall objectives in risk communication and how does risk communication differ from crisis communication?
- What are the challenges in keeping dietary guidance from turning into fear and negative perceptions about food which may result in “unintended” consequences?
- What are the overall challenges in communicating about emerging nutrition and food safety issues with consumers?
- What are consumer perspectives about food-related risk?

Part 2: Putting Concepts into Action: “Practical Approaches to Risk Communication”

Jeff Strei, IFIC Media Relations

This short risk communication workshop will follow up on the interesting communication challenges presented in the panel discussion. Participants will learn the building blocks of presenting nutrition and food safety messages through the media to the general public including audience analysis, message development, and the needs of reporters. The workshop will also focus on the factors that may interfere with risk communication messages being heard by reporters and their viewers/readers.