

Please Take One!



SUPPLEMENT OF THE MONTH:

Zinc

What is zinc?

Zinc is an essential mineral and it is the second most abundant trace element in the human body. In fact, the body has about 2g of zinc, found mostly in the brain, bones, kidney, liver, prostate and eyes. Zinc has antioxidant properties and has a role in DNA and RNA metabolism. It is found in more than 300 enzymes, and is also used as an enzyme catalyst. Zinc plays a major role in immune function, reproduction, growth and development, wound healing, blood clotting, taste and smell, insulin action, blood clotting, and thyroid function, behavior and learning.

Where is zinc found?

Zinc is found in foods that contain protein, like meat, poultry, fish, and dairy. It is also found in some vegetables and nuts. Zinc is especially high in oysters, wheat germ, beef, pumpkin and squash seeds, dark chocolate and cocoa powder, peanuts, and crab. Many breakfast cereals and wheat products are fortified with zinc.

What are the benefits of zinc?

Zinc is effective in treating diarrhea in malnourished children in the developing world. It has also been shown to treat acne, slow the progression of age-related macular degeneration, improve weight and depression status in anorexia nervosa, improve symptoms of ADHD (attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder), and decrease the duration of the common cold. Additionally, zinc appears to slow bone loss, treat and prevent peptic ulcers, treat leg ulcers, and improve vitamin A deficiency when taken with vitamin A. Topically, it seems to help prevent and treat gingivitis, herpes simplex virus, and treat burns.

Are there interactions between zinc and food, herbs or other supplements?

Zinc absorption may be improved when taking Vitamin D and riboflavin, while calcium, chromium, and phytic acid may decrease zinc absorption. High intake of zinc may interfere with the absorption of manganese, magnesium, iron, copper, and bromelain, and chromium.

Are there side effects?

Zinc can cause nausea, vomiting, and a metallic taste in the mouth. Topically, it can cause itching, stinging and burning.