



Zinc



Overview

This is a mineral we need to be healthy. It's found in cells throughout the body. Your body uses zinc for many things, like growth and development, making proteins and DNA, and helping the immune system fight off germs.

How we get it

Our bodies can't make the zinc we need. What are some good sources? Animal proteins are rich in zinc. Oysters, red meat and chicken (especially the dark meat) are all good sources. Fish contains zinc, too. Zinc is also in nuts, whole grains, beans and yeast. And many breakfast cereals contain added zinc.

Health benefits

What are the health benefits? When you get enough zinc, you help your immune system fight off infections. You help keep your skin healthy. Zinc may also be good for your eye health as you age.

When we don't get enough

What happens if you don't get enough zinc? Well, this isn't common, but it can happen. When it does, you can have a wide range of symptoms. You can experience things like hair loss, diarrhea and loss of appetite. You can have frequent infections and sores. You may have problems with your eyes and with your senses of smell and taste. Lack of zinc in infants and children can affect growth and cause other issues.

Conclusion

For more info about the role zinc plays in your health, talk to your doctor.