

Total Nutrition

Think Zinc

by Mindy Hermann, RD

(NAPSA)—Cold season is the season for zinc. Magazines, radio and television are filled with advertisements for zinc supplements to treat colds. Despite the abundant promises, science is unsure whether zinc supplements help treat the common cold. What is known, however, is that zinc is extremely important for everyday health.



Mindy Hermann

The mineral zinc takes part in dozens of biochemical reactions in the body, working hand in hand with close to 100 different enzymes.

Your immune system needs zinc in order to work properly, and your skin uses zinc to heal wounds. Without zinc, you wouldn't be able to taste or smell normally.

Zinc is most abundant in animal proteins like beef, chicken and some types of seafood, namely oysters. Other good sources include nuts, legumes, whole grains, dairy products and fortified breakfast cereals like Whole Grain Total®.

"Zinc is particularly well absorbed from meats, eggs and seafood and is absorbed less efficiently from plant foods," explains Jane Higdon, Ph.D., Oregon State University. "The government's recommendation of 8 milligrams daily for women and 11 milligrams daily for men takes into

Foods With Zinc

Food	%DV
Whole Grain Total, 3/4 cup	100
Beef chuck, 3 oz.	50
Pork shoulder, 3 oz.	30
Plain yogurt, 1 cup	15
Vegetarian baked beans, 1/2 cup	10
Cashews, 1 oz.	10
Chickpeas, 1/2 cup	8
Mixed nuts, 1 oz.	8
Swiss cheese, 1 oz.	8



account that zinc absorption varies based on the types of foods eaten." Vegetarians and non-meat eaters should pay particular attention to zinc since their diets lack the richest sources of this important mineral. Fortified foods with 100 percent of the Daily Value for zinc can be a useful source of zinc in a regular and vegetarian diet.

Ask Mindy

Q: Is it true that foods with iron prevent the body from absorbing zinc?

A: In a typical diet, zinc and iron levels are not high enough to interfere with each other. Supplements that supply large amounts of elemental iron, upwards of 38 mg per day, might decrease zinc absorption. If your doctor has recommended an iron supplement, talk to your doctor about taking the supplement between meals to prevent any blocking of zinc absorption.