

Topic of the Week

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WE CARE ABOUT YOUR HEALTH

Fortify Your Body with Zinc

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As autumn winds its way to the official start of winter, many of us are looking for ways to pump up our immune system for what's expected to be a long and severe flu season.

Last month in Topic of the Week, we revealed the importance of vitamin D in battling influenza. And you're probably familiar with common cold fighters like vitamin C, echinacea and ginseng.

When it comes to clobbering these viruses, you want to get sufficient amounts of zinc. It's a vital mineral known to bolster your immune system and help relieve cold and flu symptoms.

Last year, researchers at the University of Florida discovered that zinc boosts the action of your body's T cells - which help wipe out viruses and bacteria.¹

Other research shows zinc is useful in relieving cold and flu symptoms such as cough, sore throat, mucus discharge and body aches.

The *Journal of the American Pharmacists Association* published an overview of zinc studies. It showed the mineral reduced the severity of a cold when it was administered within 24 hours of the first symptoms appearing.²

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Another study revealed participants who took zinc lozenges had "a shorter mean overall duration of cold (4.0 vs. 7.1 days)." The study authors remarked the improvement in cold symptoms was likely related to the antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties of zinc.³

Zinc Helps in Different Ways

As well as boosting your immune system, zinc also...

- Heals wounds
- Lifts enzyme activity
- Supports thyroid function
- Assists in insulin production and storage

For women, zinc is necessary during pregnancy as it's important for the growth and development of a baby. Pregnant women need to increase their zinc intake by at least 3 mg daily.

For men, zinc holds promise in fighting prostate cancer - the second leading cause of cancer death in adult males.⁴ Zinc may play a significant role against cadmium, a chemical that is a risk factor for prostate cancer. Scientists believe zinc produces higher levels of a protein that attaches itself to cadmium and thereby blocking the chemical from causing damage in the body.⁵

Exercise of the Week

Abdominal Bridge on Exercise Ball with Single Leg Lift/Abduction

Difficulty: Moderate

(Consult your chiropractor before starting this or any other exercise.)

Start: Assume abdominal bridge position on exercise ball. Focus on bringing belly button inward, and hold entire body in a straight line - ankles to ears.

Exercise: Lift one foot a few inches off floor. Stabilize yourself, keeping body still. Abduct leg as far as possible to side, keeping body still. Hold for 5-10 counts. Return to start position, and repeat with other leg. Maintain a tight abdomen throughout. Repeat 5-10 times per leg.



Getting the Right Amount

Zinc is not stored in your system for very long, so you need to get sufficient amounts from your diet.

Good sources of zinc include oyster, meat, crab and lobster. You can also find it in whole grain bread, legumes and cereals. However, plant-based sources contain phytates (phytic acid), which bind to zinc. This process can interfere with your body's ability to fully absorb the mineral.

Your required daily amount of zinc varies according to your age, diet, sex and state of health.

Recommended Dietary Allowances for Zinc				
Age	Male	Female	Pregnancy	Lactation
Birth to 6 months	2 mg*	2 mg*		
7 months to 3 years	3 mg	3 mg		
4 to 8 years	5 mg	5 mg		
9 to 13 years	8 mg	8 mg		
14 to 18 years	11 mg	9 mg	13 mg	14 mg
19+ years	11 mg	8 mg	11 mg	12 mg

* Adequate Intake(AI). Source: Institute of Medicine, Food and Nutrition Board.



Research reveals 25% of adults over 60 years are deficient in zinc. This is usually because their aging digestive systems are not as efficient at absorbing nutrients. If you fall into the 60 + age category, you may need to supplement with this mineral.

Another group at risk for deficiency is vegetarians. They may require 50% more zinc than non-vegetarians.

To get as much zinc as possible from plant sources, the American Dietetic Association suggests you soak beans, grains, and seeds in water for several hours before cooking. After soaking, let the contents sit until sprouts form.

As well as vegetarians, anyone with colitis, Crohn's disease, diabetes and liver problems may need additional zinc.

Never try "do-it-yourself" dosing with zinc supplements. Excessive zinc can actually depress your immune system and decrease levels of HDL (good) cholesterol. Your chiropractor will be happy to advise you on the right amount.

Along with regular chiropractic care, zinc is one of the best ways to fortify your body from colds and flu. The results could be a sniffle-free winter!

Quote of the Week

"Good judgment comes from experience, and experience comes from poor judgment."

- Anonymous

For more health tips, visit online www.citruspie.com



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