

THE AMA-ZINC NUTRIENT

essential for good health

A well-balanced diet not only tastes great, but also provides essential vitamins and minerals. Zinc is a mineral that you need in small amounts every day to stay healthy.

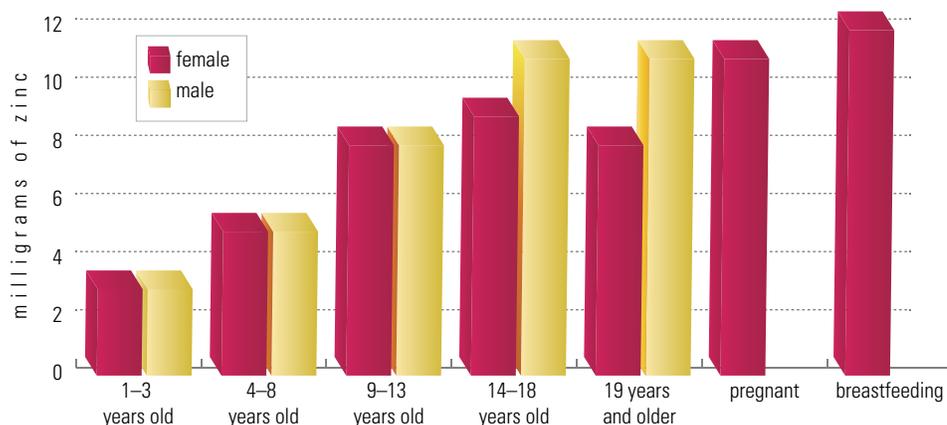
Why is zinc important for good health?

Zinc plays a key role in:

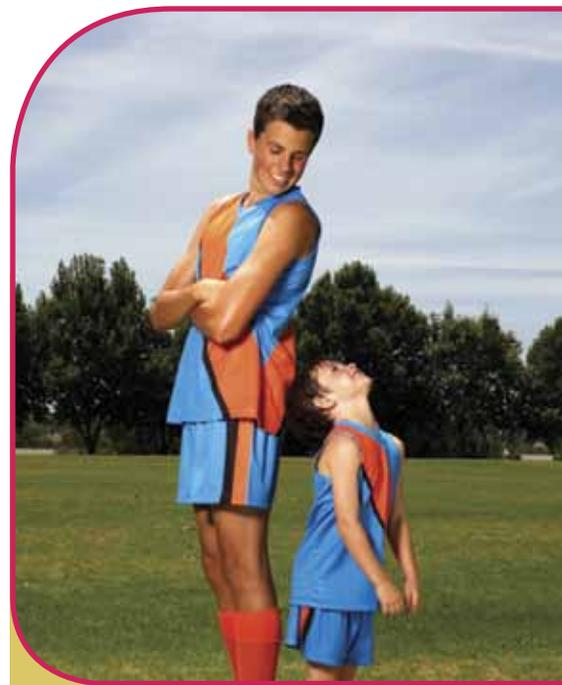
- **IMMUNITY** – Zinc helps to strengthen the immune system and heal wounds.
- **GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT** – Zinc is needed to help the body grow and develop, which is especially important for infants, children, adolescents and pregnant women.
- **SENSES** – Zinc is required for proper sense of smell and taste.
- **METABOLISM** – Zinc helps activate over 100 enzymes in your body, which in turn help your body use protein, fat and carbohydrates.

How much zinc do you need?

The amount of zinc that you need every day depends on your age and stage of life. The chart below is a guide.



Source: Dietary Reference Intakes. The Essential Guide to Nutrient Requirements. Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, 2006



DID YOU KNOW?

AS MUCH AS 80% OF THE ZINC CAN BE LOST IN FOOD DURING PROCESSING. FOR THAT REASON, GO FOR WHOLE GRAINS LIKE BROWN RICE INSTEAD OF REFINED GRAINS LIKE WHITE RICE.

What About Zinc and The Common Cold?

Taking zinc lozenges within 24 hours of the first symptoms may help lower the severity and duration of a cold. However, researchers don't have enough evidence yet to recommend a specific dose or formulation of zinc. Caution: zinc lozenges can have a bad taste and cause nausea. Taking megadoses of zinc can actually weaken your immune system.

WHAT ABOUT ZINC SUPPLEMENTS?

Generally, you don't need to take a zinc supplement if you're eating a balanced diet based on the types and amounts of food recommended in *Canada's Food Guide*. However, you may need zinc supplements if you have digestive problems such as celiac disease, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis or short bowel syndrome. Vegetarians may also have trouble getting enough zinc if animal foods are not part of their diet. Too much zinc can also be harmful. Avoid getting more than 40 mg of zinc a day from food and/or supplements combined, and always talk to your health care provider first before taking any supplements.

FOOD FACT: A serving of skinless, roasted chicken leg is a good source of zinc containing over 2 mg – that's almost half the daily zinc requirement for a young child.

Zinc Links

- Food Sources of Zinc. Dietitians of Canada (dietitians.ca)
- Dietary Supplement Fact Sheet – Zinc. National Institutes of Health (nih.gov)



CHICKEN MEDITERRANEAN Serves: 4

Nutritional information per serving (453 g):

calories 450 | protein 54 g | total fat 21 g | saturated fat 5 g | carbohydrate 11 g | fibre 4 g | sugar 5 g | cholesterol 215 mg | sodium 400 mg | potassium 32% | calcium 6% | iron 20% | vitamin A 10% | vitamin C 45% | vitamin B6 64% | vitamin B12 50% | folate 18% | magnesium 36% | zinc 65%

Visit chicken.ca for this recipe and more nutritious meal ideas.

Which Foods Contain Zinc?

Zinc is found in many different foods. Oysters have the highest zinc content per serving, followed by meat and alternatives, such as poultry dark meat, crab and baked beans. Choose a variety of foods every day to get enough zinc. Here are some common foods listed by their zinc content.

Zinc Content (mg) of Some Common Foods:

Meat and Alternatives

Oysters, Pacific, boiled or steamed
75 g (2½ oz) = **24.9**

Baked beans, canned
175 mL (¾ cup) = **4.3**

Chicken leg, skinless, roasted
75 g (2½ oz) = **2.1**

Chicken thigh, skinless, roasted
75 g (2½ oz) = **1.9**

Pork chop, centre cut, roasted
75 g (2½ oz) = **1.6**

Eggs, scrambled
2 large = **1.3**

Tofu, firm or extra firm
150 g (¾ cup) = **1.2**

Chicken breast, skinless, roasted
75 g (2½ oz) = **0.8**

Salmon, Atlantic, baked or broiled
75 g (2½ oz) = **0.3**

Milk and Alternatives

Swiss cheese 50 g (1½ oz) = **2.2**

Cheddar cheese 50 g (1½ oz) = **1.6**

Yogurt, plain 1-2% MF 175 mL (¾ cup) = **1.6**

Milk 1%, 2% 250 mL (1 cup) = **1.1-1.2**

Vegetables and Fruit

Hearts of palm, canned
2 hearts – 85 g = **3.7**

Green peas, boiled
125 mL (½ cup) = **1.0**

Shiitake mushrooms, cooked
125 mL (½ cup) = **1.0**

Avocado – ½ = **0.6**

Grain Products

Bran cereals
30 g = **1.8-2.4**

Rice, wild, cooked
125 mL (½ cup) = **1.2**

Rice, long grain brown, cooked
125 mL (½ cup) = **0.7**

Bread, whole wheat
1 slice = **0.6**

Spaghetti, whole wheat, cooked
125 mL (½ cup) = **0.6**

Rice, long grain white, cooked
125 mL (½ cup) = **0.4**

Bread, white
1 slice = **0.3**

Source: Canadian Nutrient File, 2010