

WHY YOU ARE NOT LIKELY TO GET ENOUGH ZINC FROM THE AVERAGE AMERICAN DIET

The following are some facts about the need and availability of zinc:

1. “The average adult body contains approximately 2 to 2 ½ grams of zinc, but the body pool of biologically available zinc appears to be small and to have a rapid turnover, as evidenced by the prompt appearance of deficiency signs.”¹
2. Dr. Frank Viets of the U.S. Department of Agriculture has noted soil deficits of zinc in at least 30 states and has found the deficit growing during the last two decades.² (Dr. Viets made that statement over 30 years ago.)
3. “Another concern is that fertilizers overloaded with phosphorus, potash and nitrogen (the type of fertilizer that is used in non-organic farming) decreases the absorption of trace elements by plants.”³
4. In many plant sources of zinc, phytic acid and fiber block its absorption.
5. Unfermented soy products (soy milk, soy protein) also block absorption of zinc.
6. Because of depleted soil and factors that block zinc’s absorption, food charts are often inaccurate in assessing the actual available zinc in a food.
7. Food processing removes most of the zinc. “Food processing is designed to remove anything from the food that will discolor, turn rancid or attract bugs. Bugs cannot grow without zinc, so 80% of the zinc is removed from wheat flour in the milling process. “Frozen peas (and other vegetables) have less zinc than backyard peas because the surface level of trace elements is removed with EDTA to produce a brighter green when the peas are cooked.”⁴
8. Stress uses zinc at an increased rate in the body.
9. Refined foods like white sugar, white flour, sodas and alcohol all require your body to provide zinc to metabolize those foods. Eating these foods, which usually make up a large part of the American diet, is a typical cause of zinc deficiency.
10. Increased amounts of copper intake (as from drinking the water from copper plumbing) require increased amounts of zinc to balance to the copper.

¹ Passwater, R.A., Ph.D., Cranton, E.M., M.D., Trace Elements, Hair Analysis and Nutrition, Keats Publishing, (1983), p123

² Viets, Medical World News, August 12, 1972

³ Passwater, R.A., Ph.D., Cranton, E.M., M.D., Trace Elements, Hair Analysis and Nutrition, Keats Publishing, (1983), p138

⁴ Pfeiffer, Carl C., Zinc and Other Micro-Nutrients, Keats Publishing, (1978), p8