

ZINC

Function, Deficiency, and Supplementation

Recommended intake:

15 mg/day

-Many athletes may not be consuming enough.

-Those who restrict food intake or follow a vegetarian diet have a greater chance of a low zinc intake.

Zinc Status:

-Commonly measured by plasma (blood) zinc concentrations.

-Normal range is:
75-130 ug/dL

Zinc Status in Athletes:

-Multiple studies indicate that around 25% of endurance athletes have low zinc values.

Zinc Supplement:

-Take caution to avoid taking excessive zinc, this can cause a copper deficiency.

-Not recommended to take supplements greater than 15 mg/day long-term (more than a few weeks)

-Taking a dose of zinc at the first onset of a cold may reduce length of the cold by one day. Follow directions on the package.

12 Foods High In Zinc



Oysters



Chicken



Cheddar Cheese



Cashews



Watermelon Seed



Almonds



Milk



Red Meat



Yoghurt



Pumpkin Seed



Salmon



Cacao/Cocoa
Dark Choc

Role of Zinc

Zinc is a mineral, essential in the diet.

- ◇ Zinc is required for the structure and activity of hundreds of different enzymes in the body
- ◇ Involved in many physiologic systems, including hormone metabolism, reproduction, taste, wound/injury healing, skeletal development, and gastrointestinal function
- ◇ Helps the immune system

Exercise & Zinc

- ◇ Exercise may cause zinc to be redistributed in the body and therefore reduce serum zinc levels
- ◇ Athletes also may have increased losses of zinc in sweat, skin, and urine, and so need more zinc than non-athletes.
- ◇ Low zinc levels may have a negative effect on athletic performance by reducing endurance capacity in muscles.
- ◇ Low zinc levels may be involved with fatigue and impaired immune system.

Zinc in food:

- ◇ Zinc is best absorbed from animal foods.
- ◇ Include beef, chicken, pork, and fish, and dairy foods each day in your diet to provide zinc. (And also iron and protein!)
- ◇ Other good sources of zinc are: fortified breakfast cereals, baked beans, cashews, chickpeas, cheese, oatmeal, almonds, and kidney beans

Bottom line:

Eat enough Zinc-rich foods to keep your immune system strong and to continue to perform at your best!