

# MINERALS

**Minerals** are classified as micronutrients as we only need small amounts.

They can also be known as **trace elements**.

You probably know that **calcium** is important for bone health and that **iron** is important for healthy blood but there are other minerals that are also important in the diet.

## ZINC

**Zinc** is an essential part of over 200 enzymes and plays a role in cell division in your body, so the tissues that grow throughout life such as hair, skin and nails need it to remain healthy.

It is also important as it helps in the synthesis and breakdown of carbohydrates, fats and protein in your diet.

The requirement for men is higher than women as it has a role in testosterone production.

It is also important for your immune system, helping you to fight off infections, as well as helping the body repair damaged tissues or heal wounds.

Zinc is naturally abundant in animal protein, especially red meat, turkey, oysters and prawns. Plant foods also provide zinc, especially nuts (cashew and brazil), pumpkin seeds, beans, lentils and quinoa. Zinc is like iron in that it is absorbed better from animal sources than plant ones.



However, despite being found in a wide variety of foods zinc is often deficient in today's diet as much can be lost in the milling process and a lot of soils have been depleted due to use of fertilizers.

## WHEN MIGHT YOU CONSIDER A SUPPLEMENT?

- When the body is under stress and more prone to colds and upper respiratory tract infections. Evidence suggests sucking a zinc tablet during the first few days of a cold may help reduce symptoms
- If you have a high alcohol intake or are sweating this can affect zinc in you body
- If you are on a calorie restricted diet
- If you are vegan or strict vegetarian
- Zinc may have a role in building muscle so your requirements may increase when training

A daily 10 mg of zinc is enough as a nutritional top-up and up to 15 mg could be taken if you are suffering from symptoms of cold or flu

Do not exceed 20 mg

Healthspan Elite Zinc Defence Lozenges can be sucked regularly to reduce symptoms

**Speak to a PJA nutritionist for advice and where to purchase: [nutrition@thepja.co.uk](mailto:nutrition@thepja.co.uk)**