

Nutrition News

Information for Senior Citizens

Developed by Colorado State University Extension
Department of Food Science & Human Nutrition

Think Zinc!!

What do trash cans have in common with people's health? Well, most trash cans today are made of plastic, but remember the old galvanized metal garbage cans? Zinc was one of the metals used to make those cans. But who would guess that a metal used to make trash cans could be important for your health.



Did you know . . .

- Zinc is needed by our bodies for wound healing.
- Our immune system needs zinc to help fight off disease.
- Zinc is needed by our body's cells to build new protein.
- We need zinc to help us taste food.
- Zinc is needed to prevent night blindness.

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Zinc is very important to your health, especially as you get older. As people age, sometimes their bodies don't absorb zinc as well as they used to, which can lead to numerous problems. Without zinc, you may not be able to taste foods as well as you used to. This may result in a decreased appetite and consequently a decrease in food intake.

As food intake decreases, your body has access to less zinc and other important vitamins and minerals found in food, leading to poor health. As a result, you may get sick more easily, and it's harder to recover from sickness. It's a downward spiral, but it's one we can prevent by understanding zinc.

Too much alcohol and some medicines make it hard to absorb zinc. Although insoluble fiber such as wheat bran is important, it binds zinc and prevents some of it from being absorbed!

Understanding zinc is important because it can be tricky to get enough. Men need 11 mg each day and women need 8 mg of zinc a day. This may not sound like much, but it can be hard to get.

Meats and oysters are rich in zinc, but few other foods contain more than a trace. A 3½-oz portion of lean cooked beef, for example, contains 7 mg of zinc. But what about vegetarians, how can they get the zinc that they need?



Hard to Find, Hard to Absorb — What to Do?

The problem isn't as tough as it sounds. Several ready-to-eat cereals are fortified with zinc. And you can eat high-zinc foods and high-fiber foods at different times to help increase absorption. But the best news is, if you get the right amount of zinc in your daily diet, you will usually absorb all you need in spite of high-fiber foods.

Let's take a look at some of the best food sources of zinc.

Food Item	Zinc (mg)
Meats, 3½ oz cooked	
Lean beef	7.0
Lamb	4.5
Turkey, white	2.0
Chicken, white	1.0
Veal, lean	4.0
Other foods	
Large egg	1.0
8 oz Milk	1.0
¾ cup Dried beans or peas, cooked	1.0
¾ cup Whole-grain cereal, cooked	1.0
1 oz Shredded wheat	1.0
3 oz Raw oysters	14.0
1 Tbsp Wheat germ	1.0

Remember the recipe for *Salmon Flatties* found in Volume 1, Issue 6 of *Nutrition News*? One serving contains 5 mg of zinc--about 1/3 of your daily need. The *Salmon Flatties* are a good source of zinc because they contain raw wheat germ, which is high in zinc as well as iron and vitamin E.

A menu that includes a dish of All-Bran, one cup of milk, and two ounces of lean beef contains 8 mg of zinc--enough to meet the requirements for a woman. Another meat serving, more milk, or some beans will provide the extra zinc needed to meet the needs for a man. Although some zinc will be bound by the fiber in these foods, the U.S. Daily Recommended Intakes allows for this--so you'll still get enough zinc.

Lastly, some medicines can inhibit the absorption of zinc. Checks with your doctor to make sure that the medication you take doesn't prevent zinc absorption. If you think that you might not be getting enough zinc, ask your doctor or a Registered Dietitian if a multi-vitamin/mineral supplement is right for you.

For more information on food and medications, contact your local county Extension office. In Colorado, request CSU's Fact Sheet 9.361, *Nutrient-drug Interactions and the Food You Eat*. Or check out CSU Extension's web site for its publications and fact sheets: <http://cerc.colostate.edu/titles.html>.

You can also call the *National Institute for Aging* (1-800-222-2225), and ask for a copy of their *Age Page* called "Dietary Supplements: More is Not Always Better" and "Safe Use of Medicines by Older People." These can also be found online at—<http://www.niapublications.org/agepages/supplements.asp>, and <http://www.niapublications.org/tipsheets/medicines.asp>.

Quick Tip: Tips for Eating Out

- Try an LMLT (lean meat, lettuce and tomato) sandwich, and go light on the mayonnaise.
- Order a pizza piled with veggies and a salad on the side.
- Order a regular entrée and split it with a friend or spouse. Or, have your server box up half the entrée to take home and eat later.

Smothered Round Steak

Ingredients:

- 16 oz. round steak, trimmed
- 2 cans reduced-fat, low sodium cream of mushroom soup
- ½ cup onion, diced

Yields 4 servings (7 mg zinc per serving)

Directions:

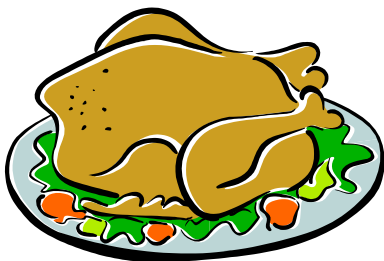
1. Brown steak in skillet, with water.
2. Combine steak, soup and onion in in crock pot.
3. Simmer 8 hours on low or 4 hours on high.
4. Serve over rice.

A Timely Tip . . . lowering your utility bills

A crock pot can save time and money if used often. You can put in a skinless chicken breast, a quartered potato and onion, and a carrot cut in 1" chunks. Turn it on in the morning, spend the day visiting or shopping, and have dinner ready when you get back. It costs pennies to run, and because it cooks on very low heat, you can "set it and forget it." On a hot summer morning, you can wrap potatoes in foil, put them in the crock pot, and have baked potatoes for dinner--without heating up the oven! Add a carrot or some Brussels sprouts and you'll have two servings from the Vegetable Group. It's cheaper than using the oven, and it won't heat up the kitchen. It's easy to make wonderful soups--a ham bone plus diced potato, carrot, celery, onion, and hot water produces vegetable soup for dinner with almost no effort on your part.

The shopping guide below is designed to help you make healthy choices at the grocery store. Just cut along the dashed line, then fold down the middle, and you'll have a handy comparison guide when shopping for food.

One serving of meat for a small inactive person should be about 2 ounces. Two servings a day is about right. One serving of meat for a large active person should be about 2 to 3 ounces. Two to three servings a day is about right.



A Shopping Guide for Better Health



Presented by:

**Colorado
State**
University

Extension

Senior Resource: Must I report income changes to my Food Stamp eligibility?

During your certification period, you must report changes in income of \$50 or more within ten days of the change. You must also report if you have an increase in resources (bank accounts, lump sum payments, cash on hand) exceeding \$3,000 for elderly or disabled persons, change of address and the resulting shelter expenses and adjustments in the number of people living in your home with whom you purchase and prepare food.

For more information and to find out if you or someone you know qualifies for Food Stamps, call 1-800-221-5689.

Quick Tip:

Don't desert desserts! Indulge in small desserts or split a dessert with a friend. Life's about enjoyment and you don't have to deprive yourself – just be sensible.



Check food labels for serving size, calories, and grams of fat. Then use this guide to compare different brands.

To calculate the % of calories from fat per serving of food:

1 gm fat = 9 calories

For example—

For an item that is 140 calories with 5 gm fat, multiply 5 x 9 to equal 45 calories from fat. Divide this figure by 140 total calories (45/140) to determine the percent of calories from fat (= 32 calories).

Remember, it is not each food that is recommended to be no more than 30% of calories from fat. Rather, it is a menu for a day or a week or a month that you strive to meet this recommendation.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size (246g)	
Servings Per Container	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 140	Calories from Fat 45
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 5g	7%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Cholesterol 20mg	7%
Sodium 150mg	6%
Total Carbohydrate 14g	5%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 14g	
Protein 10g	
Vitamin A 10%	Vitamin C 4%
Calcium 35%	Iron 0%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Saturated Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4	

$45 \div 140 = 32\%$ of calories from fat

