

Zinc is a mineral that is involved in the normal functioning of cells, playing an important role in the **immune system**, in healing, **and in growth and development during pregnancy, childhood, and adolescence.**

FOOD SOURCES



Beef
(100 g)
8 mg



Chicken heart
(100 g)
7 mg



Cashew
(100 g)
6 mg



Flaked oats
(100 g)
3 mg



Bean
(100 g)
1 mg



Crab
(100 g)
4 mg



It is possible to **check the adequacy of zinc by blood test**. The reference values are 70 to 120 ug/dL, and up to 900 ug/g in urine.

NUTRITIONAL REQUIREMENTS



0 - 3 years old

2 - 3 mg/day



4 - 18 years old

5 - 11 mg/day



+19 years old

8 mg/day



+19 years old

11 mg/day



all ages

11 - 12 mg/day



all ages

12 - 13 mg/day

SIGNS OF DEFICIENCY

Deficiency can arise due to a **poorly balanced and varied diet**, usually high in refined cereals and unfermented breads [high in fiber and phytates, which hinder zinc absorption].

Symptoms include:

- Growth and fertility problems
- Loss of appetite
- Impaired immune function
- Alopecia [loss of hair on the scalp], diarrhea and skin lesions