



kids' nutrition: important minerals



MINERAL	ACTION	FOOD SOURCES	RDA/DAILY INTAKE	NOTES
Important Minerals These naturally occurring elements remain in the body. Note that some nutrient recommendations vary for males (M) and females (F).				
calcium	Essential for strong bones and teeth and healthy gums.	Dairy (and fortified substitutes), leafy greens, sardines.	1-3 yr 700 milligrams (mg) 4-8 1,000 mg 9-18 1,300 mg	Take with magnesium; adolescent girls should ensure that they get the RDA to help prevent osteoporosis later in life.
copper	Aids in red blood cell, bone, and collagen formation.	Almonds, avocados, legumes, broccoli, oats, seafood, soybeans.	1-3 yr 340 micrograms (mcg) 4-8 440 mcg 9-13 700 mcg 14-18 890 mcg	Consider hidden sources, which include copper pans and plumbing, to prevent levels that are too high.
iron	Essential to blood cell reproduction, growth, immune health, and energy production.	Eggs, fish, liver, meat, leafy vegetables, whole grains.	1-3 yr 7 mg 4-8 10 mg 9-13 8 mg 14-18 11 mg (M) 15 mg (F)	Not recommended for anyone with a serious infection, as iron may enhance survival of infectious agents.
magnesium	Vital for enzyme activity and energy production.	Dairy, fish, leafy greens, meat, seafood.	1-3 yr 80 mg 4-8 130 mg 9-13 240 mg 14-18 410 mg (M) 360 mg (F)	Fat-soluble vitamins and foods high in oxalic acid (chard, rhubarb, spinach) can hinder absorption.
manganese	Needed for fat and protein metabolism, energy production, healthy nerves, and immune system.	Avocados, nuts, seeds, sea vegetables, whole grains.	1-3 yr 1.2 mg 4-8 1.5 mg 9-13 1.9 mg 14-18 2.2 mg	About 37 percent of Americans do not get enough of this mineral.
selenium	Anticancer antioxidant; works best with vitamin E to protect heart and liver.	Brazil nuts, brewer's yeast, broccoli, brown rice, meat, seafood, whole grains.	1-3 yr 20 mcg 4-8 30 mcg 9-13 40 mcg 14-18 55 mcg	Selenium may be needed in supplement form because many soils in the US are deficient in this mineral.
zinc	Important in immune health; deficiency results in loss of senses of smell and taste.	Egg yolks, legumes, soy, seafood, sea vegetables, whole grains.	1-3 yr 3 mg 4-8 5 mg 9-13 8 mg 14-18 11 mg (M) 9 mg (F)	Deficiencies have been linked to eating disorders and slow growth.