

NUTRITION

Zinc for Babies: Why It Matters and Best Food Sources

Zinc supports your baby's growth, immune system, and development. Learn why zinc becomes important around 6 months and the best zinc-rich foods to offer.

Frequently Asked Questions

How much zinc does my baby need?

Babies 7–12 months need about 3 mg of zinc per day. Because the body's stores from birth begin to run low around 6 months, zinc-rich first foods become important.

Why does zinc matter more after 6 months?

Babies are born with zinc stores and get some from milk, but these decline as the baby grows. Solid foods rich in zinc help meet rising needs from around 6 months onward.

What are the best zinc foods for babies?

Soft meats like chicken, well-cooked lentils and beans, oatmeal and other whole grains, and dairy such as yogurt and cheese are good sources.

Do vegetarian babies get enough zinc?

They can, with planning. Lentils, beans, oats, and dairy supply zinc, though plant zinc is absorbed a bit less efficiently. Talk to your pediatrician if your baby is vegetarian or vegan.

Can babies get too much zinc?

Excess zinc, usually from supplements, can interfere with copper and iron absorption. Food-based zinc from a varied diet is the safest approach. Do not give zinc supplements without medical advice.

Is zinc related to iron?

Yes. Many iron-rich first foods, like meats and lentils, also supply zinc, so the same meals that protect against iron deficiency often cover zinc too.