

## WHAT IS IODINE?

Iodine is an essential nutrient for the human body and a basic chemical element. Iodine is found most often in seawater, seawater fish and seaweed, and the soil around the sea. While the human body needs iodine, it cannot make it. Iodine must be consumed in the diet. Foods that provide the most iodine include fish and seafood. Other foods like yogurt, cheeses, breads, and cereals also offer iodine, as does salt labeled as "iodized". Fruits and vegetables offer varying amounts of iodine, depending on the soil and fertilizer in which they were grown.

## WHY IS IODINE NECESSARY?

Iodine plays a vital role in the production of thyroid hormones, which control the body's metabolism as well as other important functions. During pregnancy and infancy, iodine is critical for the proper brain and bone development of the baby. A deficiency of iodine can lead to a number of debilitating conditions.

## HOW COMMON IS IODINE DEFICIENCY?

40% of the world's population is at risk of iodine deficiency. While this is typically seen in developing nations, a recent trend of iodine deficiency in the US, UK, Australia, and New Zealand shows cause for concern.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF IODINE DEFICIENCY?

The following are all symptoms of iodine deficiency:

- Goiter
- Hyperthyroidism
- Frustration
- Depression
- Mental retardation
- Poor perception levels
- Abnormal weight gain
- Decreased fertility
- Coarse skin
- Fatigue
- Fibrocystic breast disease

## DON'T I GET ENOUGH IODINE FROM SALT?

In 1924, the FDA introduced a voluntary program to add iodine to table salt as a safe and efficient way to help prevent disease caused by iodine deficiency. While iodized salt still offers an important preventative, it may be creating a false sense of security because most of the salt used in the US today is not iodized.

While 70% of the salt sold to consumers in grocery stores is iodized, this only represents 1/5 of the total salt consumed in the U.S. Virtually none of the salt used by the pre-prepared or fast food industries is iodized and this represents 70% of the salt consumed in the US.

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