Biotin-Consumer

url: https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/Biotin-Consumer/  
  
  
Biotin  
Fact Sheet for Consumers  
  
This is a general overview. For more in-depth information, see our health professional fact sheet.  
  
What is biotin and what does it do?  
Biotin is a B-vitamin found in many foods. Biotin helps turn the carbohydrates, fats, and proteins in the food you eat into the energy you need.  
  
How much biotin do I need?  
The amount of biotin you need each day depends on your age. Average daily recommended amounts are listed below in micrograms (mcg).  
  
Life Stage Recommended Amount  
Birth to 6 months 5 mcg  
Infants 7 12 months 6 mcg  
Children 1 3 years 8 mcg  
Children 4 8 years 12 mcg  
Children 9 13 years 20 mcg  
Teens 14 18 years 25 mcg  
Adults 19+ years 30 mcg  
Pregnant teens and women 30 mcg  
Breastfeeding teens and women 35 mcg  
What foods provide biotin?  
Many foods contain some biotin. You can get recommended amounts of biotin by eating a variety of foods, including the following:  
  
Meat, fish, eggs, and organ meats (such as liver)  
Seeds and nuts  
Certain vegetables (such as sweet potatoes, spinach, and broccoli)  
What kinds of biotin dietary supplements are available?  
Biotin is found in some multivitamin/mineral supplements, in B-complex supplements, and in supplements containing only biotin.  
  
Am I getting enough biotin?  
Most people get enough biotin from the foods they eat. However, certain groups of people are more likely than others to have trouble getting enough biotin:  
  
People with a rare genetic disorder called biotinidase deficiency  
People with alcohol dependence  
Pregnant and breastfeeding women  
What happens if I don t get enough biotin?  
Biotin deficiency is very rare in the United States. Biotin deficiency can cause thinning hair and loss of body hair; a rash around the eyes, nose, mouth, and anal area; pinkeye; high levels of acid in the blood and urine; seizures; skin infection; brittle nails; and nervous system disorders. Symptoms of biotin deficiency in infants include weak muscle tone, sluggishness, and delayed development.  
  
What are some effects of biotin on health?  
Scientists are studying biotin to understand how it affects health. Here is an example of what this research has shown.  
  
Hair, nail, and skin health  
Dietary supplements that contain biotin are often promoted to improve the health of your hair, skin, and nails, but there is little scientific evidence to support these claims. In a few small studies, some people with thin and brittle nails who took high doses of biotin had harder nails. Doctors have also reported that in a few cases, high doses of biotin have improved a rare hair disorder in children and skin rash in infants. More research is needed before biotin supplements can be recommended for any of these conditions.  
  
Can biotin be harmful?  
Biotin has not been shown to cause any harm. However, supplements that contain biotin above recommended amounts may cause false results in some lab tests, including those that measure levels of certain hormones, like thyroid hormone.  
  
Does biotin interact with medications or other dietary supplements?  
Yes, some medications you take may affect your biotin levels, and biotin may interact with certain medications. For example, treatment for at least 1 year with antiseizure medications (used to treat epilepsy) can significantly lower biotin levels.  
  
Tell your doctor, pharmacist, and other health care providers about any dietary supplements and prescription or over-the-counter medicines you take. They can tell you if the dietary supplements might interact with your medicines or laboratory tests, or if the medicines might interfere with how your body absorbs, uses, or breaks down nutrients such as biotin.  
  
Biotin and healthful eating  
People should get most of their nutrients from food and beverages, according to the federal government s Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Foods contain vitamins, minerals, dietary fiber, and other components that benefit health. In some cases, fortified foods and dietary supplements are useful when it is not possible to meet needs for one or more nutrients (for example, during specific life stages such as pregnancy). For more information about building a healthy dietary pattern, see the Dietary Guidelines for Americansexternal link disclaimer and the U.S. Department of Agriculture s MyPlate.external link disclaimer  
  
Where can I find out more about biotin?  
For general information about biotin  
Office of Dietary Supplements (ODS) Health Professional Fact Sheet on Biotin  
For more information on food sources of biotin  
ODS Health Professional Fact Sheet on Biotin  
For more advice on choosing dietary supplements  
ODS Frequently Asked Questions: Which brand(s) of dietary supplements should I purchase?  
For information about building a healthy dietary pattern  
MyPlateexternal link disclaimer  
Dietary Guidelines for Americansexternal link disclaimer  
Disclaimer  
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