



Iodine

Top nutrients for women

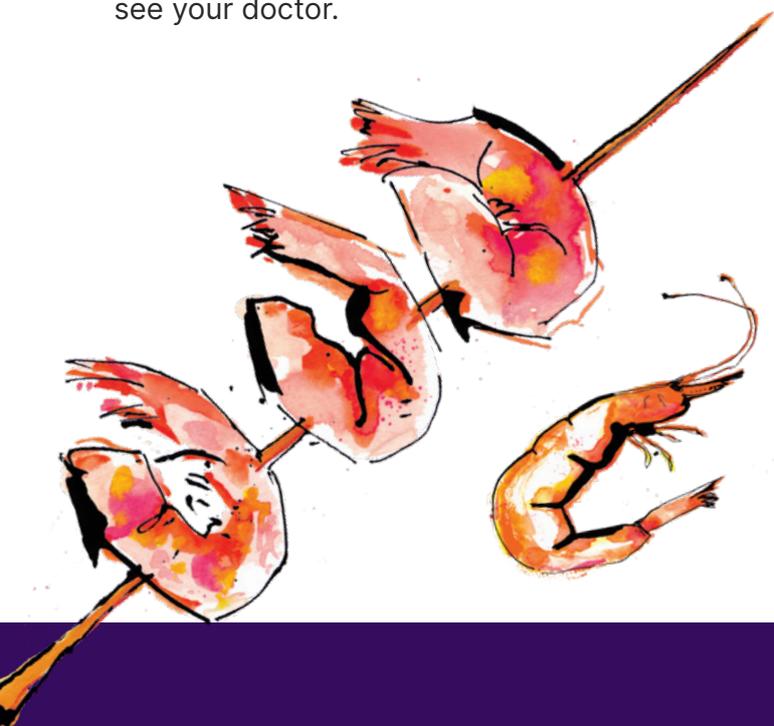
Why is iodine important for women?

Iodine is needed for healthy growth and development. It helps your thyroid (a gland in your neck) make hormones. These hormones support bone and brain development. They also help regulate your metabolism (how your body breaks down food into energy).

Iodine is especially important during pregnancy and breastfeeding. If iodine levels get too low at these times, it can affect the baby's growth and cause other serious problems.

If you aren't getting enough iodine, you might experience tiredness, weight gain, muscle weakness or a lump or swelling in your neck.

If you're worried about your iodine levels, see your doctor.



Where can I find iodine?

You can buy iodine supplements. You can also find iodine in some foods, such as:

- iodised salt (salt that is enriched with iodine)
- bread – in Australia all bread, except organic bread and bread mixes, is made with iodised salt
- seafood (e.g. fish, prawns, oysters, tinned salmon, seaweed)
- dairy
- eggs
- green leafy vegetables.



How can I get enough iodine?

We only need to consume small amounts of iodine, but it can be difficult to get enough from food.

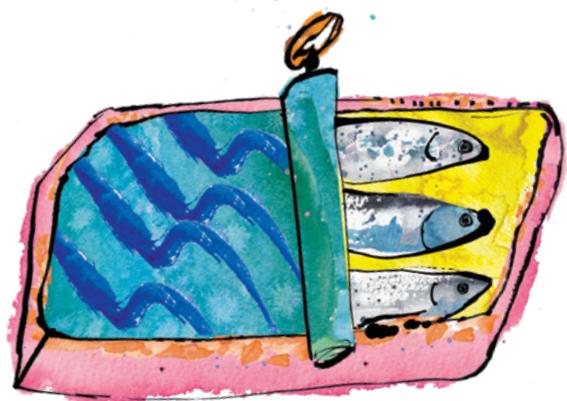
If you are pregnant, breastfeeding or planning a pregnancy, iodine supplements are recommended. Check with your doctor before taking them, especially if you have a thyroid condition.

You can increase your iodine by eating green leafy vegetables, dairy, eggs and other healthy foods.

If you eat fish, aim for two to three serves of low-mercury seafood each week (e.g. salmon and tinned tuna). Limit high-mercury seafood (e.g. flake and orange roughy), especially if you are pregnant or planning a pregnancy.

Sushi rolls (made with seaweed) are rich in iodine. Just be careful not to eat too many sushi rolls regularly, as it's important not to have too much iodine.

You can also choose wholegrain bread that's enriched with iodine. Enjoy eggs and spinach on toast, or grainy sourdough topped with tinned salmon, cucumber, lemon juice and mayonnaise.



Iodine and a vegan diet

If you follow a vegan diet, it can be hard to meet your iodine needs. Ask your doctor for more information.



Still confused about healthy eating?

To help simplify the complicated, we've created seven more fact sheets on these important nutrients for women:

- Calcium
- Folate
- Iron
- Magnesium
- Protein
- Vitamin B
- Vitamin D

Get the fact sheets at

jeanhailes.org.au/resources/fact-sheets



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Disclaimer: This information does not replace medical advice. If you are worried about your health, talk to your doctor or healthcare team.

We write health information for people with diverse backgrounds, experiences and identities. We use the term 'women', but we acknowledge that this term is not inclusive of all people who may use our content.

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