

Zinc Ameliorates Cold Symptoms, Meta-Analysis Finds (Physician's First Watch for February 17, 2011)

Sniffing people will likely ask about a *Cochrane Library* meta-analysis that finds zinc to be effective in shortening the duration of the common cold.

In an update of a 1999 *Cochrane* review, the authors examined zinc's efficacy both in shortening the duration of colds and in preventing them. They considered the results of 15 randomized trials, totaling over 1300 participants.

Zinc supplements significantly reduced the severity of cold symptoms as well as the length of illness. Among people taking zinc within 24 hours of the start of symptoms, the risk for still having symptoms at the 7-day mark was about half that of those not taking zinc. In preventing colds, zinc supplements taken for at least 5 months conferred a risk for catching a cold that was only two thirds that of controls.

Zinc's side effects included a bad taste and nausea. *(I think this happens only when the is taken on an empty stomach or zinc levels are already high enough and the extra zinc is now an overdose. This can be avoided by using a liquid zinc taste test like Zinc Tally. See below)*

[Cochrane Library abstract](#) (Free abstract)

Zinc Tally liquid taste test (Purchase Metagenics *Zinc Tally* or make your own) to determine when more zinc is needed. Don't eat, drink, or smoke an hour before.

Sip 1 tsp., swishing it around in your mouth for 1 minute or until you begin to taste it strongly. If it has little or no taste or the taste comes on slowly, you need more zinc. If it tastes very strong quickly, you have enough zinc in your system. It's ok to swallow the test sample unless the taste is immediately very unpleasant.

- Zinc deficiency- no taste at all
- Inadequate zinc levels- no immediate taste but after a few seconds mouth may feel dry, furry or metallic
- Moderate zinc levels- a definite strong unpleasant taste is noted almost immediately
- Optimal zinc levels- a strong, unpleasant taste is noted immediately

90% of the population may be zinc deficient, men more than women. Hormone imbalance, infertility, prostate issues, low adrenals, maldigestion/malabsorption, weak hair, skin or nails, very dry skin, low appetite and/or frequent infections may be symptoms.

Supplementing zinc: don't use more than 50mg of zinc daily. You want to be sure you're getting adequate trace minerals to balance the zinc. Retest in 4 weeks. Some people check weekly or daily when fighting a cold.

Make your own zinc taste test liquid:

http://www.newmediaexplorer.org/chris/2003/11/16/do_your_own_zinc_level_testupdate.htm