

Iodine

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Iodine is considered by many doctors and nutritionists to be the number one nutritional deficiency of today. Dr. David Brownstein notes that over 90 percent of his patients have iodine deficiency as the main source of their health problems. Back to Basics this month will explain why this is so and why supplementing our diets with iodine is essential today. –Ingri Cassel

Iodine is a relatively rare element, ranking 62nd in abundance of elements on our planet. Prior to the great flood in Noah's time, there were adequate amounts of iodine in the soil. After the flood, much of this trace element had been depleted from the soil and is now more concentrated in our oceans. The soil in coastal areas generally contains adequate levels of iodine while the more inland and mountainous regions have lesser amounts. Deforestation and farming techniques that lead to erosion of the topsoil also contribute to iodine deficient plants.

Discovery of Iodine

Iodine was discovered in 1811 when French chemist Bernard Courtois was making compounds of potassium and sodium from seaweed for gunpowder. He observed purple vapors arising from the mix after adding too much sulphuric acid. Due to its purple color, the new element was named iodine (iodes in Greek means violet.)

In 1819, Swiss physician Jean Francois Coindet began to use iodine medicinally in his practice to treat goiter, publishing the results of the successful treatment of 150 patients the following year. In 1829, French physician Jean Lugol developed a solution of 10% potassium iodide, 5% iodine and 85% distilled water that has been used extensively since and is called Lugol's iodine. When Lugol's iodine was developed, it became the standard for other iodine preparations. However, newer ones on the market claim better assimilation and results. [Read this article on Magnascent Iodine.](#)

Iodine Deficiency

The analysis of "National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys" (NHANES) data of moderate to severe iodine deficiency demonstrates its presence now in a significant proportion of the U.S. population, with a clear increasing trend over the past 20 years, caused by reduced iodized table salt usage. Along with magnesium and selenium, iodine is one of the most deficient minerals in our bodies. Dr. Brownstein says, "After testing over 500 patients, I found that 94.7% of my patients are deficient in inorganic iodine." Despite its being critical to normal neurocognitive development, only 51 percent of U.S. prenatal multivitamin brands contain any iodine.

Symptoms of iodine deficiency include muscle cramps, cold hands and feet, proneness to weight gain, poor memory, constipation, depression and headaches, edema, myalgia, weakness, dry skin, and brittle nails. Sources include most seafood (ocean fish, shellfish – especially oysters), unrefined sea salt, kelp and other seaweeds, fish broth, butter, pineapple, artichokes, asparagus, dark green vegetables and eggs. The best inland herbal source of iodine is black walnut husks and leaves from the tree. Certain vegetables, such as cabbage and spinach, can block iodine absorption when eaten raw or unfermented and are called goitrogens.

Eating fish won't give you iodine in milligram (mg.) amounts. To get 13.8 mg iodine (the real daily requirement), you would have to eat 10-20 pounds of fish per day.

According to Dr. David Miller, iodine is needed in microgram (mcg.) amounts for the thyroid, milligram (mg.) amounts for breast and other tissues, and can be used therapeutically in gram amounts. The highest concentration of iodine in the body is in the breasts, prostate and ovaries.

More history

Iodine was added to table salt in the 1920s to combat goiters. In the 1960s, iodine was also added to bakery products as a dough conditioner. In 1969, researchers looked at the bioavailability of iodine in salt versus bread. Two groups were given the same amount of iodine but one group got the iodine through salt and the other group through bread. The results showed that iodized salt reduces the assimilation of iodine by 90 percent. This is no doubt due to the fact that refined salt has been stripped of its minerals plus has added chemicals (reason it is pure white) making it toxic.

In the 1980s, bromine replaced iodine as a dough conditioner in the baking industry. The change was triggered by a few researchers at the National Institutes of Health who were concerned that too much iodine could cause a malfunctioning of the thyroid gland. This was at the same time the RDA (recommended daily allowance) of iodine was being established by the World Health Organization – 1980. The safe “upper limit” RDA for iodine is only 1 mg. daily and was based on data supplied by endocrinologists with a thyroid fixation who ignored the rest of the body's iodine requirements. The goal of the RDA for iodine is the prevention of cretinism, goiter and hypothyroidism—not whole body sufficiency for iodine. The actual optimal daily intake for iodine is 13.8 mg. a day.

The Halogens

Halogens and their relative atomic weights																		
																	F	Fluorine 18.99
																	Cl	Chlorine 35.45
																	Br	Bromine 79.90
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ass of elements known as halogens. Other halogens are chlorine, bromine, fluorine and astatine. Bromine (or its reduced form – bromide) is used as an antibacterial agent in hot tubs and as a fumigant in agriculture and for termites and other pests. It is toxic to the human body and yet is used in inhalers, nasal sprays and even in some carbonated drinks (Mountain Dew, AMP Energy Drink and some Gatorade products contain brominated vegetable oils.)

Bromine lies just above iodine in the periodic table and is the closest in molecular size and weight to iodine of the halogens. Due to this similarity, bromine has the ability to bind to iodine receptors in the body, inhibiting what little dietary iodine is consumed from being assimilated.

From 1971 to 2000, the NHANES showed iodine levels declined by 50 percent in the U.S. The substitution of bromine for iodine in bakery products contributes to a large part of these declining iodine levels.

Fluoride has been added to most U.S. cities' municipal water

and gets into processed food and beverage products that come from cities that are fluoridated. Although science has shown that fluoride is toxic to the human body, and several European countries have banned the practice of fluoridating their water, approximately 69 percent of Americans live in communities with fluoride added to their water supply. Fluoride is also in many prescription medications such as the anti-depressants Paxil and Prozac, as well as Flonase and Flovent.

Fluoride was first reported to cause thyroid problems in 1854 when it was found to be a cause for goiter in dogs. Fluoride has been shown to inhibit the ability of the thyroid gland to concentrate iodine. Additionally, research shows that fluoride is much more toxic to the body when iodine deficiency is present.

Chloride, also in the family of halogens, is an important element in the extracellular fluid, the body containing approximately 100 grams of chloride. Chlorine, the oxidized form of chloride, is a toxic element added to municipal water supplies, swimming pools and hot tubs as a disinfectant. Dioxin, one of the most toxic carcinogens known to man, is a byproduct of chlorine. The latest sugar-substitute, sucralose (Splenda®), contains chlorinated refined sugar. Chlorine and its byproducts have been linked to birth defects, cancer, reproductive disorders (including stillbirth) and immune system disorders.

Like bromine and fluoride, accumulations of chlorine in the body will displace iodine.

Perchlorate is now a pervasive environmental contaminant. 90 percent of the perchlorate manufactured in the U.S. is used for rocket fuel by NASA, defense contractors and the Air Force. It is also used in car air bags, leather tanning and fireworks. Perchlorate consists of one atom of chlorine surrounded by four atoms of oxygen. It can damage the iodine

transport mechanism in the body and can cause thyroid cancer, goiter, hypothyroidism, poor fetal/neonatal development, disruption of the normal menstrual cycle, neurological problems and a weak immune function, even at fairly low levels.

Ground water is contaminated throughout much of the U.S. from manufactured perchlorate. The entire lower Columbia River is contaminated with it. Approximately 20 million Americans get their water from the lower Columbia River which irrigates more than 1.8 million acres of land involving 15 percent of our nation's crops and 13 percent of our livestock. When perchlorate is released into the water supply, it can persist for long periods of time. Out of 130 samples of commercial lettuce, 83 percent of both organically grown lettuce and conventionally grown lettuce from the southwestern U.S. contained significant amounts of perchlorate.

Both dairy and human milk is now contaminated with perchlorate. Significant levels of perchlorate were found in 98 percent of the samples from 47 dairy milk samples taken from 11 states. 100 percent contamination for human milk was found in a study involving 36 samples from 18 states. What is most shocking is that the mean perchlorate level in human milk was 500 percent higher than dairy milk. Since breast milk is the only source of iodine for an infant, the study's authors concluded that the recommended iodine intake by pregnant and lactating women needs to be revised upwards.

The end of anti-biotics

Though iodine kills 90 percent of bacteria on the skin within a minute or so of its application, its use as an infection fighter has been ignored. Iodine is the only substance capable of killing all classes of pathogens: gram-positive and gram-negative bacteria, mycobacteria, fungi, molds, yeasts, viruses and protozoa. Most bacteria are killed within 15 to 30 seconds of contact.

According to Dr. David Derry, iodine is effective “for standard pathogens such as Staphylococcus, but also iodine has the broadest range of action, fewest side effects and no development of bacterial resistance.” There is a world of difference between using an antibiotic – anti-life substance – and using an antiviral, antifungal substance like iodine, which is life serving because it is a basic and essential nutrient.

Iodine kills single celled organisms by combining with the amino acids tyrosine or histidine when they are exposed to the extracellular environment. All single cells showing tyrosine on their outer cell membranes are killed instantly by a simple chemical reaction with iodine that denatures proteins. Nature and evolution have given us an important mechanism to control pathogenic life forms and we should use it and trust it to protect us in ways that antibiotics can't.

Breast and Prostate Cancer

As you can see, our exposure to the toxic halogens – fluoride, bromide and chlorine – as well as a host of other chemicals has exacerbated the problem of iodine deficiencies. As noted previously, the breasts and prostate/ovaries require large amounts of iodine for optimal health. Currently one in seven women (14 percent) has breast cancer and one in three men (33 percent) has prostate cancer. Iodine is essential for preventing and curing breast and prostate cancers. Actually, all forms of cancer would be diminished by its concentrated use. Dr. Tullio Simoncini, an oncologist in Rome who is famous for his sodium bicarbonate treatments that reverse cancer, uses iodine to treat skin cancer.

Several studies have demonstrated a relationship between low iodine intake and fibrocystic disease of the breast, both in women and laboratory animals.

Iodine supplementation will gradually eliminate the first

phase of cancer development in the breasts (fibrocystic disease) so no new cancers can start. It also kills abnormal cells in the body that are distant from the original cancer. According to Dr. Derry, iodine supplementation works the same for prostate cancer as it is similar to breast cancer.

Detoxifying with Iodine

Iodine intake immediately increases the excretion of bromide, fluoride, and some heavy metals including mercury and lead. Bromide and fluoride are not removed by any other chelator or detoxifying technique. Dr. Kenezy Gyula Korhaz states that iodine chelates heavy metals such as mercury, lead, cadmium and aluminum and halogens such as fluoride and bromide, thus decreasing their iodine inhibiting effects.

The toxicity of modern life impacts iodine levels. Heavy metals get stored in the same receptors that are looking for iodine. Almost all of us are exposed to bromine and fluorine and are storing these toxic halogens in our iodine deficient receptors as well. Iodine has the highest atomic weight of all the common halogens (126.9), and iodine supplementation is the only option for removing these toxic halogens from the thyroid and the pineal gland, where fluoride concentrates especially when there is a deficiency of iodine in the body. In an age of increasing radioactivity and toxic poisoning specifically with fluoride, chlorine, bromide, and mercury, iodine is a necessary mineral to protect us from harm. By taking adequate amounts of iodine daily, these toxic substances will increasingly flow out of the body in the urine.

Humanity is traveling down a deadly path. There is "overwhelming evidence that every child, no matter where in the world he or she is born, will be exposed, not only from birth, but from conception, to man-made chemicals that can undermine the child's ability to reach its fullest potential – chemicals that interfere with the natural chemicals that tell tissues how to develop and construct healthy, whole

individuals according to the genes they inherited from their mothers and fathers,” says Dr. Theo Colborn, Senior Program Scientist at the World Wildlife Fund. Every pregnant woman should be using iodine and magnesium chloride applied transdermally to initiate protective action for her offspring.

Recommended reading:

- Iodine: Why You Need It, Why You Can't Live Without It by David Brownstein, M.D.
- Iodine – Bring Back the Universal Medicine by Mark Sircus, Ac, O.M.D. <http://iodine.imva.info>

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