

Your Brain Fog and Fatigue Might Point to This Common Yet Easy-to-Fix Deficiency

Many people suffer from a selenium deficiency and have no idea they are deficient in this important mineral that also acts as an antioxidant. Take the quiz below to see if you have any of the symptoms of selenium deficiency.

Selenium Deficiency Quiz

1. Do you have brain fog? Poor memory?
2. Do you suffer from fatigue?
3. Is your immune system weak? Do you often get colds and/or flu?
4. Have you experienced infertility?
5. Do you have slow wound healing?
6. Do you shed a lot of hair?
7. Have you experienced discoloration of your skin and nails?
8. Are you hypothyroid?
9. Have your asthma symptoms gotten worse?
10. Are your nails brittle?

If you answered yes to even one of these questions, you might have a selenium deficiency.

Why People Have a Selenium Deficiency

A new study finds that climate change is lowering the amount of selenium in agricultural soils, a potential health risk factor as selenium deficiency has been linked to cardiovascular disease and certain types of cancers. (2/21/17) Insufficient selenium intake has been estimated to affect up to 1 billion people worldwide. Dietary selenium availability is controlled by soil-plant interactions.

Also, people with digestive problems can suffer from absorption issues that can result in a selenium deficiency.

Problems Associated with Selenium Deficiency

Spacey? Foggy? Cloudy Mind?

Your forgetfulness may not be due to aging but to a deficiency of selenium. Nerve cells need selenium to produce glutathione, one of the brain's most important antioxidants. Animals fed a low selenium diet make less glutathione. Also, blood levels of selenium drop as you age—by 7 percent after age sixty and 24 percent after age 75, according to one study.

- **Thyroid Problems**

Selenium is needed for converting the T4 thyroid hormone (thyroxine) into the active hormone T3 (triiodothyronine). When these hormones are off, the risk for developing hypothyroidism, a condition associated with lethargy, depression and weight gain, increases. While iodine is also necessary for proper thyroid health, a deficiency in selenium also contributes to poor thyroid function.

- **Weak Immune System**

Selenium supports the immune system and contributes to your body's natural defenses against the cold, flu and other immune-compromised conditions. The immune system requires cells to communicate with each other when dealing with germs and bacteria. Selenium, as an antioxidant, supports cell communication.

- **Infertility**

Selenium affects sperm quality and motility. In fact, the combination of selenium and vitamin E seem to work synergistically to promote male fertility.

- **Poor Wound Healing**

Got a cut or bruise that just doesn't heal like it should? It might be that you're not getting enough selenium. Selenium helps cell tissue repair. When wounds don't heal, or they heal very slowly, examine your selenium status as research suggests that selenium may help wounds heal faster.

- **Other symptoms** associated with selenium deficiency include muscle weakness, heart problems, muscle wasting and reoccurring illnesses such as the flu. Chronic selenium deficiency has been linked to mental retardation, heart disease, cancer, asthma and rheumatoid arthritis.

Best Sources of Selenium

We need around 400 mcg of selenium per day. Include some of the following foods in your diet to make sure you are getting adequate selenium. Brazil nuts are the best food source of selenium; eat no more than 2-3 per day. (1 brazil nut can have 95.9 mcg selenium)

Additional unprocessed food sources of selenium are:

- Free range turkey and chicken
- Grass-fed beef
- Pasteurized eggs
- Oats, barley and brown rice
- Sunflower and sesame seeds
- Broccoli, spinach and asparagus
- Tuna, oysters, salmon, clams, halibut and shrimp
- Wheatgrass {eoa}

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This article originally appeared at .