This Micronutrient Slows Aging (If You Get the Dose Right)

JUN. 4, 2025

BY DANN ALBRIGHT, CSCS

It boosts your immune system, fights inflammation, and supports brain health but excess could speed up aging.

Zinc gets a lot of attention as a healthy aging supplement—and a new study backs that up. But it also shows that getting too much zinc can actually accelerate the aging process.

Here's what you need to know about getting the right amount, where to get it from, and how it helps your brain and body stay sharp as you age.

Zinc Is Linked With a Younger Biological Age

There's lots of research backing up the idea that **zinc can help us age gracefully**. It can cut down on chronic inflammation, keep your immune system functioning properly, and reduce oxidative stress, which **could be related to some aging-related neurodegeneration**.

Just how much does zinc slow the aging process? We now have an answer.

A **2025 article in *Clinical Nutrition*** quantifies how much zinc intake affects your biological age. (**Biological age** looks at the health of your cells, not just how long you've been alive.)

Here's what researchers found:

Zinc intake within the recommended range (11–40mg daily for men, 8–40mg daily for

women) was associated with a 0.13-year delayed biological age. So a 60-year-old getting adequate zinc might have a body that's more like a 59.9-year-old's.

Is that a huge difference? No. But get this:

People who got the recommended amount of zinc and exercised a moderate amount each week were 31% less likely to experience accelerated aging than people who didn't get enough zinc or exercise.

("A moderate amount" here is equal to about 75 minutes of **high-intensity exercise** or 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise every week.)

Getting enough zinc is important. The same is true of exercise. But not getting enough of **both** could make the situation worse.

Be Careful: You Can Get Too Much Zinc

There's another interesting finding in this study that super agers should know about:

In this study, people taking more than 40 mg/day had a biological age that was, on average, 3.23 years older than their chronological age.

Like many other micronutrients, you can get too much zinc. This is especially important for readers who take supplements. It's not hard to find a supplement with 50 mg or even 100mg of zinc—that's over twice as much as the study found to accelerate biological aging.

Will a day—or even a week—of too much zinc immediately age you three years? Probably not. But unless a doctor has told you that you're zinc deficient, be careful about over-supplementation of this mineral.

Why Zinc Matters for Healthy Aging

Your body uses zinc for a surprising number of aging-related cellular processes, including, according to the study authors:

- DNA synthesis,
- protein metabolism,
- cell growth and division,
- bone tissue synthesis,
- immune function, and
- hormonal function.

It's also been shown to affect the central nervous system and the incidence of Alzheimer's disease. It's a powerful antioxidant, too.

You need zinc to stay healthy, especially if you want to fend off some common aging-related ailments, like inflammation and a decrease in immune function. Zinc deficiency gets more common as people get older, and **even a small deficiency can impact your immune system**.

So what can you do about it?

How to Get Enough Zinc in Your Diet

The researchers in this study emphasize that over-supplementation of zinc can age you faster, while getting the proper amount alongside a moderate amount of exercise can spare you some common age-related ailments.

How can you make sure you're getting enough zinc?

Fortunately, it's not hard. There are lots of foods that are high in zinc. You just need

to know what you're looking for. Remember, we're aiming for over 8mg for females and over 11mg for males in a given day.

Here's **where to get zinc** in your diet:

- **Seafood:** Oysters have the highest concentration of zinc per ounce, but crab, shrimp, and sardines are also great sources.
- **Meat and poultry:** Beef is especially high in zinc, and both pork and turkey also have a helpful amount.
- **Cereals and grains:** Fortified cereals often have 25% of the daily value of zinc, while oats, brown rice, and whole wheat bread have a smaller—but respectable—amount.
- **Legumes:** Pumpkin seeds, lentils, peanuts, and kidney beans are all notable sources of zinc.
- **Eggs and dairy:** Cheese and Greek yogurt are especially high in zinc, but you can get at least a small amount from just about any form of dairy, as well as eggs.

If you're eating a well-balanced diet with lean meats, grains, and a variety of vegetables, you're probably doing just fine when it comes to zinc. Consider tracking your intake over the course of a week or so to see if you're hitting that 8mg or 11mg minimum.

Still concerned about getting enough zinc? You could ask your doctor about a zinc test and discuss supplementation. Zinc supplementation has been shown to **reduce markers of inflammation and oxidative stress**, but remember that getting too much can speed up your biological aging.

Remember: Zinc Is Most Powerful With Exercise

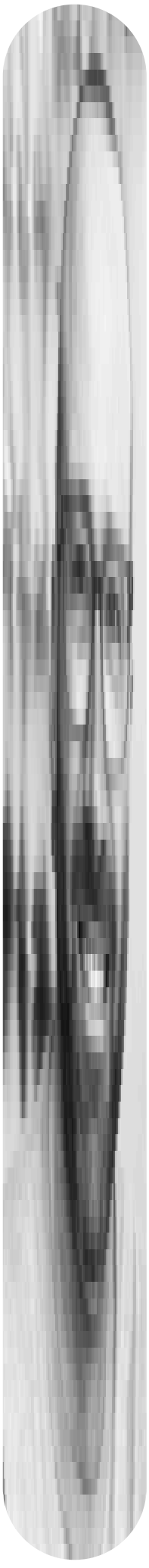
Zinc won't turn back the clock overnight, but getting the right amount—alongside regular movement—can help you stay sharp, strong, and biologically younger than

your years. So keep up the **resistance training**, cardio, **Tai Chi**, or any other form of exercise that makes you feel great in your body.

Like most things in healthy aging, we're looking for balance, not extremes. So fuel up with zinc-rich whole foods, stay active, and let your daily habits do the heavy lifting.

*The information provided in this article is for educational and informational purposes only and is not intended as health, medical, or financial advice. Do not use this information to diagnose or treat any health condition. Always consult a qualified healthcare provider regarding any questions you may have about a medical condition or health objectives.****Read our disclaimers****.*

WRITTEN BY:



Dann Albright, CSCS