



Selenium plays an important role in detoxifying the body

Pregnancy, thyroid diseases, cancer:
In medicine, selenium is considered an essential trace element. Essential means that the body cannot make this substance itself and a supply is required.

Selenium plays an important role in the detoxification of the body and is part of some enzymes, such as glutathione peroxidase.

This enzyme enhances the conversion of free radicals, especially hydrogen peroxide (H_2O_2), into harmless descendants with the help of glutathione, which is available in animal cells in quite high concentrations.

Free radicals are chemically extraordinarily responsive molecules, which can damage the hereditary substance and thus lead to mutations.

They are therefore carcinogenic substances. Furthermore, it should play a role in the immune defense and be involved in the detoxification or discharge of heavy metals.

The German Society for Nutrition estimates a daily need of 30 to 70 micrograms for people from the age of 16.

Older people, smokers, cancer patients and people with a weakened immune system may have an increased selenium requirement.

Fresh and seawater fish, egg yolks, meat, liver, grain products and nuts are the main suppliers of selenium.



Erwin Lorenzen / pixelio.de

Selenium is absorbed bound to protein.

The consequences of a selenium deficiency are not yet fully understood.

However, studies suggest a link between high blood pressure and various heart disease conditions. Links between selenium deficiency and the incidence of cancers such as liver, bowel and lung cancer have also been shown in studies.

There is also evidence that a selenium deficiency can lead to sterility in men. This happens because, firstly, the maturation of the sperm is disturbed when there is a selenium deficiency and, secondly, their mobility is reduced.

Nowadays it is considered certain that the intake of selenium is recommended for cancer diseases, certain cardiovascular diseases and

special forms of arthritis.

Selenium is also indispensable for normal thyroid function - especially during pregnancy.

The amounts of selenium to be taken in each case vary depending on the disease, and in cancer also depending on the respective treatment status.

Sources:

Suter, P.M.: Checkliste Ernährung. Thieme, Stuttgart 2002

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Ernährung: Referenzwerte für die Nährstoffzufuhr.