

# Health Benefits & Positive Effects of Copper

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One must always keep in mind that copper is not just a kind of metal, when it comes to medicine and health, copper is actually a trace element mineral that serves a wide variety of purposes for the body, both on its own as well as a cofactor. Although the body requires a comparatively tiny amount of copper per day, even that little bit of copper is proven to be essential to having very good health.

The **health benefits of copper** include proper growth, utilization of iron, enzymatic reactions, connective tissues, hair, eyes, ageing and energy production.

Copper came to be recognized in the 1870's as a basic part of our blood. This mineral is called an elemental because it is a metal. In terms of concentration, it is the third greatest metal present in our bodies. Copper is present throughout a person's body and serves many purposes that influence physical and mental health and function. Aside from being able to affect a person's health even on its own, copper actually works well even with other vitamins and minerals which in turn ensure that a person's health is very well taken care of.

Copper works with Vitamin C in the production of collagen and elastin, these are connective tissues that quite literally, hold the body together. In addition to this ability of wound healing, copper also plays a big role in the first step to wound healing, blood clotting. It also helps the body absorb and use iron more efficiently as well as partners with iron in the production of red blood cells, which serves the very important task of bringing in oxygen throughout the body. It also helps make bones stronger by working with calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, Vitamin D and Vitamin C.

Melanin, the substance that gives skin and hair their natural color actually needs copper for its production. Copper has a role in the production of hormones that come from the thyroid and is important to how fast a person's metabolism is resulting to the regulation of one's body weight. Staying fit does not only show off a person's healthy well-being but it also serves as a clear source of pride and confidence.

Copper also has a role in how the nervous system functions as well. It is necessary in the creation of the myelin sheath, which protects nerves and ensures that they're able to communicate well with each other. The connective tissues and nerves in the brain require copper for both structure and function. Copper also serves as a contributing factor in the production of the body's important antioxidant enzymes,

making a significant contribution to the control of the damaging free radicals.

Copper has a role in each and every part of the body's major systems and processes. As a trace element the body requires just a tiny bit of copper daily. Adults should have just 1.5mg to 3mg per day. Always remember that too much copper can actually be toxic to the body's system. The body's systems only need a basic amount of copper per day and are regulated by chemical reactions. Chemicals in the body that are delicately balanced as a group.

Since it's quite hard to ensure that we're taking the right amount of these nutrients that can be found in our food each and every day, it is a practical and wise move to actually start taking in some nutrient supplements that can help regulate the amount of vitamins and minerals that can be found in our bodies. However, it is still very important to be conscious of one's diet and to continue having regular exercise as these may be the healthier choice when you want to have a renewed, healthier lifestyle.

Copper has been used to promote health in various ways since ancient times. The ancient Egyptians used it to purify water for drinking, and cultures around the world used it as a form of medicine for such afflictions as sore throat, eye infections, and skin conditions. It was also applied to wounds to prevent infection. In the modern era, copper was discovered to have anti-microbial properties which made it well suited for its ancient uses. Copper can be used on surfaces or woven into fabrics to prevent the spread of bacteria.

### **Health Benefits of Copper**

Like some other metals, including iron and zinc, copper is beneficial in the diet, though poisonous in excess amounts. Copper is essential for the metabolic function of all animals and plants. The Recommended Daily Allowance for adult humans is 0.9 mg/day. Dietary copper aids in the function of the cardiovascular system, as well as promoting a healthy immune system and healthy bones. These benefits can only be derived from ingesting copper, not from wearing copper jewelry. Some natural sources of dietary copper are shellfish, organ meats, beans, nuts, whole grains, leafy green vegetables, dried fruit, and yeast.

Copper is one of a relatively small group of metallic elements which are essential to human health. These elements, along with amino and fatty acids as well as vitamins, are required for normal metabolic processes. However, as the body can not synthesize copper, the human diet must supply regular amounts for absorption.

### **Do You Get Enough?**

Until recently, it was generally believed that most people consumed adequate quantities of copper. However, modern research has shown that only 25% of the U.S. population consume the amount of copper a day estimated to be adequate by the U.S. Food and Nutrition Board of the National Academy of Sciences. It is now recommended to have a minimum daily intake of 1.2 mg/day of copper for adults.

### **Health Benefits of Copper Jewelry**



Copper jewelry is sometimes sold with claims of health benefits such as improving the skin or alleviating the pain of arthritis. Copper has a long history of use in the realm of health, and modern science has confirmed many of its beneficial properties. Many people have experienced relief from medical conditions as a result of wearing copper jewelry, which is sometimes magnetized as well. However, the effectiveness of copper jewelry has not been scientifically proven, and detractors believe that it is not the best way to reap the health benefits of copper.

Though copper is known to have many benefits for humans, it is questionable whether copper jewelry best takes advantage of them. It is unlikely for copper to be absorbed through the skin in significant amounts as a result of wearing copper jewelry, and making sure there are adequate amounts of copper in the diet may be a wiser choice. In addition, though the antimicrobial properties of copper are potentially very helpful for such things as food preparation counters or shared blankets, the benefits of a germ-resistant bracelet or anklet are negligible.

Nevertheless, many patients swear by the effectiveness of copper jewelry. Proponents believe that it can be used to target specific areas, for example, by wearing a copper bracelet to alleviate arthritis pain in the wrist and hand. There are many attractive pieces of copper jewelry on the market for both men and women, including rings, bracelets, necklaces, anklets, watches, arm bands, and nearly anything else you can think of. Whether or not there are health benefits to be gained from wearing magnetic jewelry, it often has great aesthetic value.

### **Health Benefits of Copper Bracelets**

People disheartened by modern medicine often search for natural cures for their ailments. One treatment many people swear by is wearing copper bracelets. Makers of copper bracelets have made a lot of claims about what these bracelets can do, and science is beginning to back up some of those claims.

### **How Copper Bracelets Work?**

Most copper bracelets are designed to not close completely. The small opening between the ends of the bracelet creates positive and negative magnetic fields that are supposed to help energy flow through the body. In addition, the body absorbs small amounts of copper into the blood stream when the bracelet is worn.

### **Copper Deficiency**

The human body needs copper to function. Scientists have discovered that the body needs a healthy ratio of copper to zinc in the blood stream. If there is too much zinc and not enough copper, many different health problems can result. The problem is that the body does not need very much copper and even low doses of a copper supplement can be too much. Also, copper supplements that are taken orally can wreak havoc on the digestive system. For this reason, copper bracelets are a good option for people with a copper deficiency. The copper is absorbed directly into the blood stream and in smaller doses, helping to keep the delicate balance of zinc to copper in the body.

### **What does copper do in body?**

In the blood stream, copper binds together with enzymes. These enzymes are used to aid in the creation of hemoglobin. Hemoglobin is necessary for the body to repair and heal itself. Therefore copper is a vital part of the body's immune system. Without it, the immune system is not working to its full potential. Wearing a copper bracelet can help achieve a healthier immune system.

### **Copper and Cardiovascular Disease**

A deficiency of copper has been linked to high blood pressure. High blood pressure causes many issues, including damage to arteries and aneurysms. Wearing a copper bracelet has been proven to help lower blood pressure. Of course, high blood pressure can not be controlled by just wearing a copper bracelet. Proper diet and exercise are also necessary, along with following any doctor's orders.

## **Arthritis Cure**

One of the most common claims of the copper bracelet for hundreds of years has been that copper bracelets cure joint pain from conditions like arthritis. This was generally accepted for a long time but along the way doctors and scientists began to doubt the truth behind this claim. However, in 1983, Australian doctors G.R. Struthers and D.L. Scott from the St. George Hospital conducted studies on different alternative methods for relieving arthritis pain. Their results showed that arthritis sufferers noticed significant relief from joint pain when wearing copper bracelets. While they are not exactly sure why, their research showed that using copper bracelets does help relieve arthritis pain. They concluded that doctors should consider copper bracelets along with other treatment methods for arthritis pain.

## **Copper In Medicine**

Copper has been used as a medicine for thousands of years including the treatment of chest wounds and the purifying of drinking water. More recently, research has indicated that copper helps prevent inflammation in arthritis and similar diseases. Recent scientific investigations have also demonstrated the efficacy of copper to inactivate (kill) harmful microbes. These include *L. pneumophila*, the principal agent of Legionnaire's disease, methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (the deadly pathogen that has become a primary concern for health care administrators), *E. coli* (a food and waterborne bacterium that causes severe illness and death) and *Listeria monocytogenes*, a bacterium that originates in soil and water and is spread during food handling. The colonization of such harmful microbes has been shown to be 2.1 times greater with glass and 3.0 times greater with stainless steel when compared to copper products. *E. coli* has shown to remain viable on stainless steel surfaces in excess of four and a half hours, while *E. coli* is completely dead within 75 minutes of contact with a copper surface.

## **Disadvantages of High Levels of Copper**

People who obtain too much copper may experience liver, kidney or neurological (nerve) damage. In the short term, symptoms may manifest as abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting and weakness. Other illnesses associated with high levels of copper include:

- Anxiety
- Depression

- Fatigue
- Gingivitis (gum disease)
- Hyperactivity
- Insomnia
- Lack of concentration
- Memory lapses
- High blood pressure
- Preeclampsia (serious condition in pregnancy causing swelling and high blood pressure)
- Postpartum psychosis
- Seizure
- Stuttering
- Weight gain

There are claims from some people that eating too much copper may promote cancer growth. However, there is no medical evidence to back these claims.

All facts and figures are taken directly and indirectly from the Copper Development Association.

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