

Molybdenum Fact Sheet

Molybdenum is an essential nutrient that we get mainly from food. It is normal and healthy to have some molybdenum in your body. Molybdenum is also a metal used in various industries and products. For example, a compound called molybdenum trioxide is used to make metal alloys like steel more durable. Molybdenum trioxide is also used as a flame retardant in some plastics, such as polyvinyl chloride (PVC). You might be exposed to higher levels of molybdenum or molybdenum compounds through certain jobs, like working with steel.

Molybdenum is found in

- Certain foods, including legumes (beans, lentils, and peanuts), nuts, rice, and liver.
- Some dietary supplements.
- Metal alloys used in a variety of applications, including:
 - Some artificial joints for the hip and knee.
 - Welding supplies and equipment.
- Flame retardants in some plastics, such as polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastic.

Molybdenum is an essential nutrient

- A small amount of molybdenum is needed to support many important processes in the body, such as metabolism and protecting cells from damage.

Possible health concerns of too much molybdenum, or of molybdenum trioxide

- Too much molybdenum:
 - May cause gout-like symptoms, such as joint pain.
 - Might contribute to reproductive problems.
- Molybdenum trioxide may increase cancer risk.

Possible ways to avoid exposure to too much molybdenum, or to molybdenum trioxide

- If you work with molybdenum or molybdenum trioxide, or do any welding or metalworking:
 - Be sure that your work area is well ventilated, and use proper protective equipment.
 - Follow other safe work practices, including washing hands frequently, keeping work dust out of your home, and washing work clothes separately.
 - Keep children away from welding fumes and other metal vapors and dusts.
 - If you have a metal hip or knee replacement, follow your doctor's advice for monitoring metals, including molybdenum, in your blood.
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