# 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.