

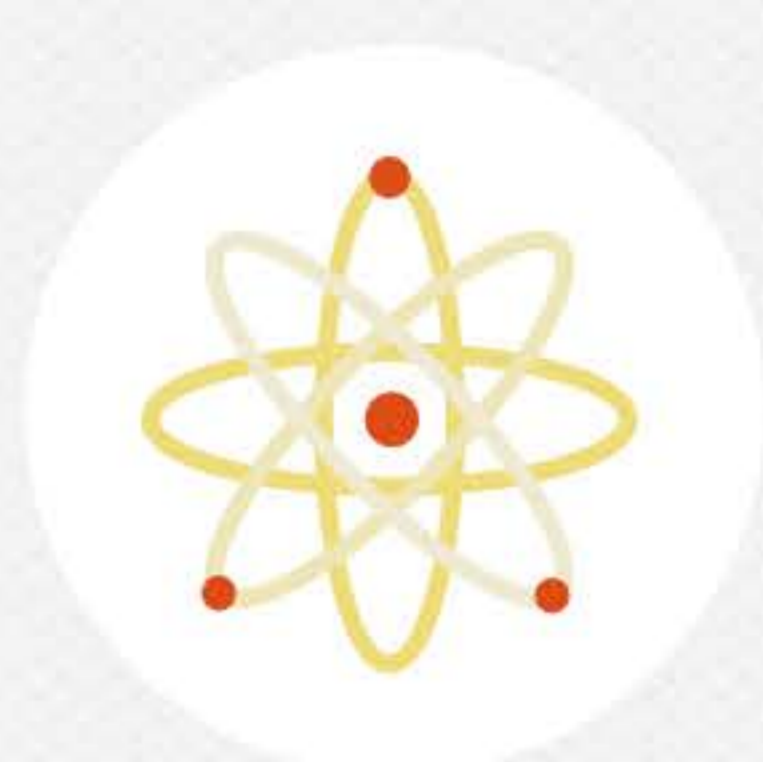


Selenium

Too Much of a Good Thing

Common Questions

What is selenium?



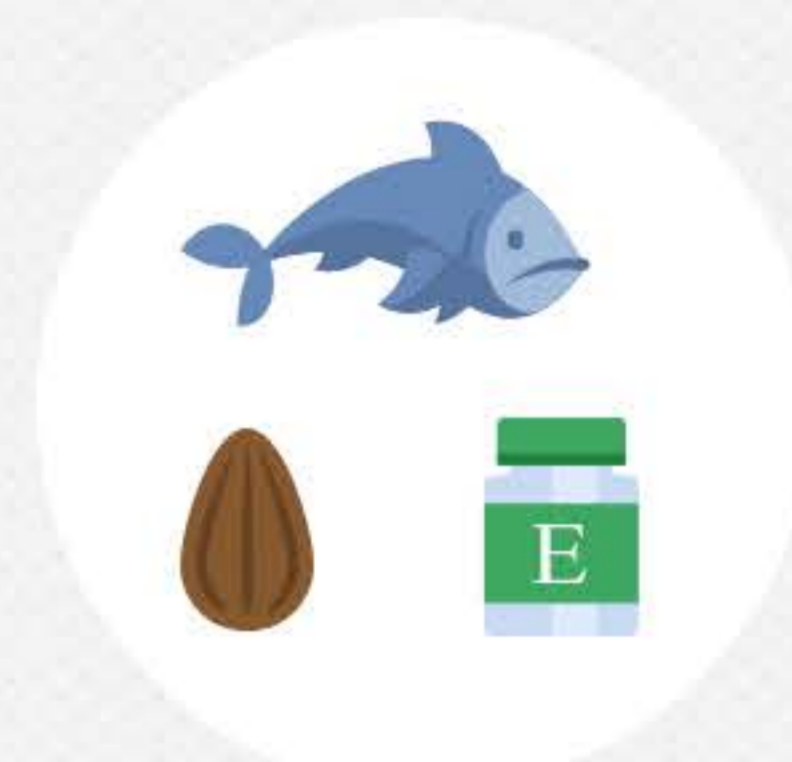
Selenium is a naturally occurring trace element. Selenium is nutritionally essential for humans.

Where does it come from?



Selenium occurs naturally in the soil, water and air. Selenium can also be introduced to the environment by things such as industrial mining and processing.

What is it found in?



Many plants and animals contain selenium. Foods like Brazil nuts and fish can have a high selenium content. Multivitamin supplements can also contain selenium.

How Much Is Too Much?



55 Micrograms

The recommended dietary allowance of selenium for adults is 55 micrograms per day.

(Canada and US)



400 Micrograms

The maximum daily intake of selenium for adults is 400 micrograms.

(Canada and US)



400 + Micrograms

Long-term overexposure may lead to selenosis, a condition that can cause fatigue, nervous system abnormalities and hair and nail damage.

What Should I Know?

Who is at risk?



People relying heavily on fish and aquatic plant harvests.

Selenium supplement users.

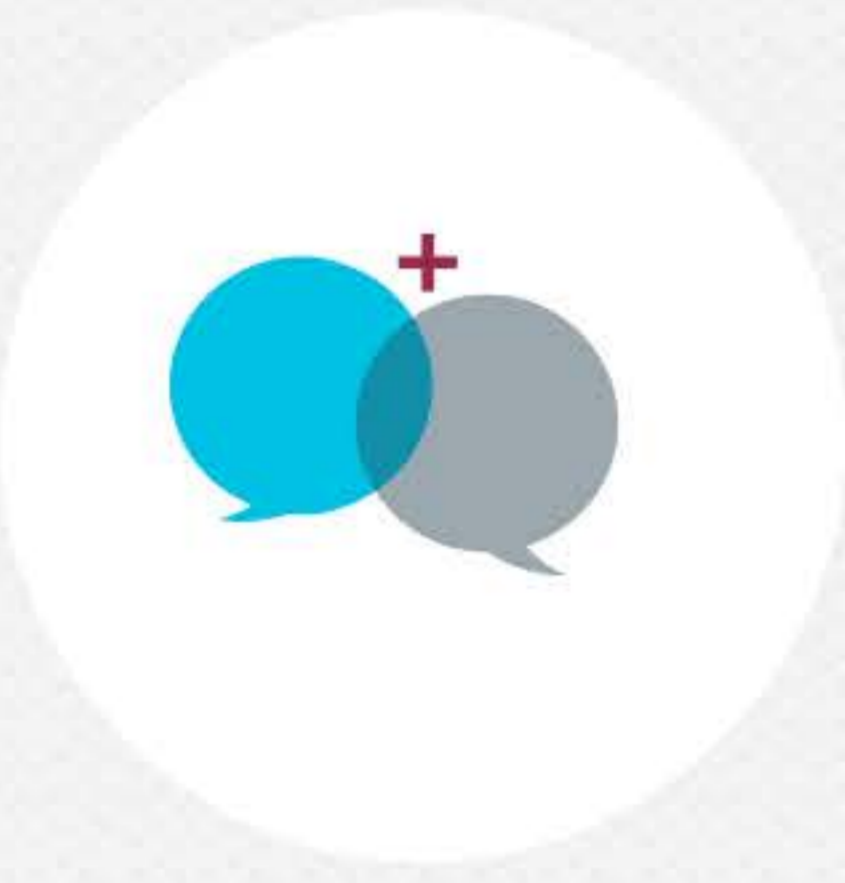
People living in areas with high concentrations of selenium in the environment.

How is it regulated?



Due to potential health impacts, Canada and the United States have set limits for how much selenium can be in drinking water and fish populations.

What can you do?

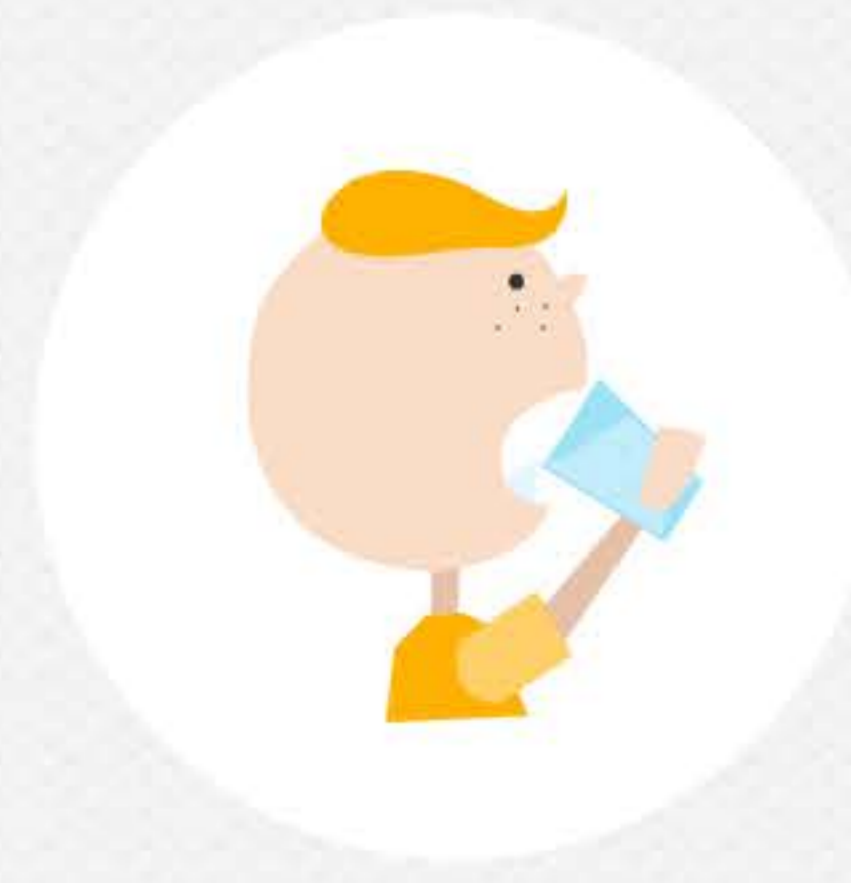


Check for selenium fish advisories in your area.

Watch your intake of certain foods and multivitamin/multimineral supplements containing selenium.

Current Limits

Drinking Water



USEPA
50 micrograms per liter ($\mu\text{g/L}$)

Health Canada
50 micrograms per liter ($\mu\text{g/L}$)

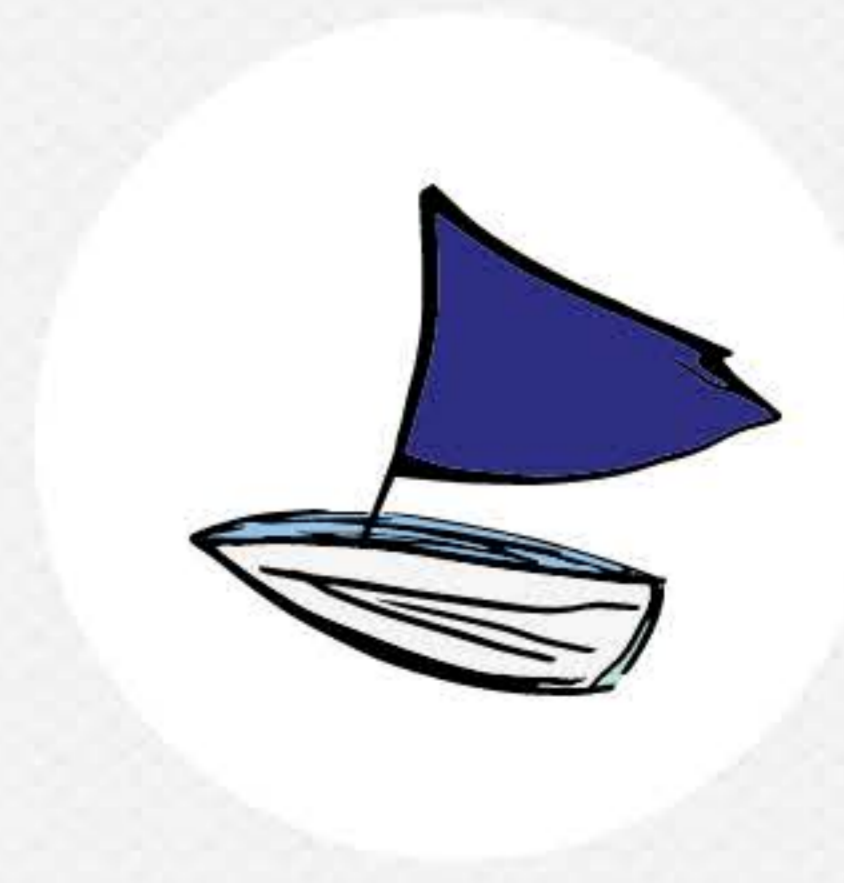
Recreational Fishers



USEPA
20.0 parts per million (ppm) wet weight

British Columbia
8.7 parts per million (ppm) wet weight*

Subsistence Fishers



USEPA
2.4 parts per million (ppm) wet weight

British Columbia
1.8 parts per million (ppm) ppm wet weight*

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For more information please visit our website at:
<https://ijc.org/en/hpab/>

* Health Canada does not currently issue national selenium standards for fish tissue (Environment and Climate Change Canada and Health Canada, 2017).

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