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Iodine in Food



Iodine is an essential micronutrient required for normal thyroid function, growth and development. The World Health Organization recommends a daily iodine intake of **150µg** for adolescents and adults.

1 Consume Foods High in Iodine

The public is advised to consume iodine-rich foods as part of a balanced diet. Seaweed, kelp, shellfish, marine fish, eggs and egg products, milk and dairy products are rich in iodine.

Iodine content in some foods rich in iodine (µg/kg)¹:



Dried kelp and laver

8 900 – 2 600 000



Seaweed snack and nori sheet for sushi

6 400 – 38 000



Shellfish and marine fish

32 – 2 100



Eggs and egg products

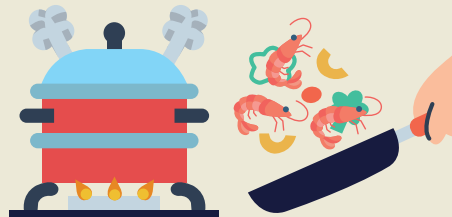
82 – 2 300



Dairy products

40 – 1 400

Iodine may dissolve in water during cooking. To retain its maximum amount, try to steam or stir-fry foods with little oil, and cook clean crustaceans intact.



② Use of Iodised Salt in the Diet



What is iodised salt?

Iodised salt is salt that has been iodised or “fortified” with iodine.

How can consumers tell if the salt is iodised or not?

Many brands of salts have iodised and non-iodised counterparts. Check their food labels (e.g. brand name and ingredient list) for any indication of iodine being added, such as the words “iodi-” (e.g. iodised, iodized, iodide, iodine), “ioda-” (e.g. iodated, iodate), “laver”, “alga”, “kelp”, “seaweed”, etc.



What to note when using iodised salt

- Keep the overall salt intake (including iodised and non-iodised salt) to below 5g (1 teaspoon) per day.
- Store iodised salt in a tight, coloured container and keep in a cool, dry place. This can minimise its iodine loss due to humidity, heat or sunlight.
- Add iodised salt to food as close to the time of serving as possible, in particular for prolonged boiling and pressure cooking. This can minimise iodine loss through the cooking process.



A note of caution: Persons with thyroid problems should seek medical advice regarding the use of iodised salt².



References

- ¹ Centre for Food Safety, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. 2011. Risk Assessment Studies, Report No 45, Dietary Iodine Intake in Hong Kong Adults.
- ² The Joint Recommendation on Iodine Intake for Members of the Public.