

# Zinc Content

## The best sources and Top Tips

- Pumpkin Seeds (1 tbs, ~10g): ~2.2 mg of zinc
- Dark Chocolate (70-85%, 100g): ~3.3 mg of zinc
- Chickpeas and Lentils (100g cooked): ~1.3 mg of zinc

These foods are excellent sources of zinc, an essential mineral for immune function, skin health, and wound healing.

### Cooking Tips

for Pumpkin Seeds and Dark Chocolate

#### Pumpkin Seeds

**1.Roasting:** Why it helps: Enhances flavor without significantly reducing zinc. How to do it: Spread seeds on a baking sheet and roast at 160°C/320°F for 10-15 minutes. Avoid high heat to prevent nutrient loss.

**2.Soaking and Dehydrating:** Soak raw seeds in water with a pinch of salt for 6-8 hours, then dry in a low-temperature oven or dehydrator.

**3.Sprinkling:** Use raw or roasted seeds as a topping for salads, oatmeal, or yogurt for an easy zinc boost.

#### Dark Chocolate

**1.Choose High-Quality:** Opt for 70-85% cocoa content to maximize zinc and antioxidants.

**2. Avoid Overheating:** If melting chocolate, use a double boiler and keep the temperature below 45°C/113°F to preserve nutrients.

**3. Pair with Nuts and Fruits:** Combine dark chocolate with zinc-rich nuts like cashews or vitamin C-rich fruits to enhance absorption.

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### Best Way to Maximize Zinc from Chickpeas and Lentils

Zinc bioavailability in legumes can be affected by naturally occurring compounds like phytates. Proper preparation can significantly increase the amount of zinc your body absorbs:

#### 1.Soaking

Why it helps: Soaking chickpeas and lentils reduces phytate levels, improving zinc availability. Rinse thoroughly under cold water. Soak in plenty of water (at least 3x their volume) for 8-12 hours or overnight. Add a splash of lemon juice or vinegar to the soaking water to further break down phytates. Drain and rinse before cooking.

**2.Sprouting** Why it helps: Sprouting increases the bioavailability of zinc by reducing anti-nutrients. After soaking, drain and leave chickpeas or lentils in a jar or sprouting tray. Rinse twice daily and allow to sprout for 1-2 days.

Cook sprouted legumes lightly for the best taste and nutrient retention.

**3.Cooking** Why it helps: Cooking legumes softens them, making zinc more accessible. Best methods:

Pressure Cooking: Quick and effective for retaining nutrients.  
Boiling: Use minimal water and avoid overcooking to preserve nutrients. Slow Cooking: Great for soups and stews, enhancing flavor while retaining zinc.

#### 4.Fermentation

Why it helps: Fermenting legumes, such as making chickpea-based miso or lentil dosa batter, reduces phytates and boosts zinc absorption.

### Benefits of Zinc for Teeth and Mouth

#### 1.Reduces Plaque and Tartar Formation

Zinc is often included in toothpaste and mouthwash because it helps inhibit the growth of plaque-causing bacteria. It also prevents the mineralization of plaque into tartar, which can lead to gum disease.

#### 2. Supports Gum Health

Zinc helps reduce inflammation and aids in healing, making it beneficial for managing gingivitis and other gum-related issues.

#### 3. Fights Bad Breath

Zinc neutralizes sulfur compounds produced by bacteria in the mouth, which are a common cause of bad breath.

#### 4. Strengthens the Immune System

Zinc supports the immune system, helping the body fight infections in the mouth, such as canker sores or oral thrush.

#### 5. Aids in Wound Healing

Zinc plays a role in cell regeneration and tissue repair, which is essential for healing oral injuries or after dental procedures.

#### 6. Improves Enamel Health

Zinc helps prevent demineralization of tooth enamel and promotes remineralization, strengthening teeth and reducing the risk of cavities.