



Selenium	
Description	Selenium is an essential trace element.
Function	Selenium is part of an antioxidant system. Protects the body cells from damage and helps maintain the body's defence system. Selenium also works in conjunction with vitamin E and is a component of many enzymes.
Human Requirements	EU RDA: Not established.
Dietary Intake¹	In the UK, the average adult diet provides 39µg daily
Food Sources	Whole wheat, meat, eggs, offal, fish, shellfish and Brazil nuts. In plant foods, selenium content can be affected by the selenium content of the soil in which the plants have been grown.
Deficiency Symptoms	Deficiency has been associated with muscle pain and tenderness and some cases of cardiomyopathy.
Precautions / Contra-Indications	Safe Upper Level: 350µg ²
Pregnancy & Breastfeeding	No problems with normal intakes.
Adverse Effects¹	Adverse effects include hair loss, nail changes, skin lesions, nausea, diarrhoea, irritability, metallic taste, garlic-smelling breath, fatigue and peripheral neuropathy.
Interactions¹	Yeast-containing selenium products should be avoided by patients taking monoamine oxidase inhibitors.
References	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mason, P. Dietary Supplements. Pharmaceutical Press, London, 2001. 2. Expert Group on Vitamins and Minerals, 2003.