

Oysters, shellfish and chocolate... delicious sources of copper for the end-of-year festivities!

Copper: an essential trace element for keeping you healthy

Brussels, 15 December 2010 - During the end-of-year festivities, the Europeans eat dishes which are not only good for the palate but also good for the body, with a number of little-known benefits. Certain foods traditionally found on Christmas tables such as oysters, lobster and chocolate are rich in essential minerals, especially copper. Did you know that copper is a vital trace element which is extremely important for maintaining lifelong good health?

It's winter: Deck the halls with copper!

Essential for proper growth and development, copper is needed in almost every part of the body: such as to ensure proper development and functioning of the heart, brain and nervous system and to transport iron. It also contributes to the regeneration of skin cells, protecting them against oxidation and strengthens bones and teeth. When taken in the depths of winter, it boosts the immune defences.

Copper can be found everywhere on Christmas tables! In oysters and scallops; in lobster, langoustines and all shellfish; in dark chocolate, walnuts and chestnuts, but also in wine. The copper content in 100 g of each of these foods ranges from 0.5 to 6 mg. The festive season offers a unique opportunity to indulge yourself while recharging your batteries with the nutrients essential for maintaining good health: copper as well as iron and zinc.

Copper: an essential trace element for good health

The recommended daily amounts range from 1 mg for a child up to 6 years of age, to 1.5 mg for an adult woman and 2 mg for an adult man and pregnant women (Recommended dietary by World Health Organisation). Along with water, the diet is the only source of copper for the body. Since the human body absorbs uses and eliminates copper on a daily basis, it is very important that it is eaten on a daily basis.

Copper deficiency can cause, among other things, anaemia, lowered resistance to infection and chronic fatigue and weakness. Copper also influences the normal metabolism of cholesterol: a diet low in copper raises "bad" cholesterol (LDL) and reduces the amount of "good" cholesterol (HDL). For the elderly, copper also plays an important role in the prevention of osteoporosis and cardiovascular diseases.

Some examples of copper-rich festive foods



(As a starter: oysters (1.5 mg*))



For the main course: lobster (5 mg*)



(And for dessert: a slice of chocolate log
(3 mg*))

*Estimated copper content for an average meal

About The European Copper Institute

The European Copper Institute (ECI) is a joint venture between the world's leading mining companies, custom smelters and semi-fabricators (represented by the International Copper Association, Ltd) and the European copper industry. Its mission is to promote copper's benefits to modern society across Europe through its headquarters in Brussels and its network of eleven national Copper Development Associations. www.eurocopper.org

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