

Gentle PATHS NewSLetter

TOP 5 NUTRITIONAL DEFICIENCIES IN CHILDREN

Welcome to our new bi-weekly nutritional series! Over the next couple months, we are going to dive deep into the Top 5 Nutritional Deficiencies we commonly see in children: Vitamin D, Zinc, Magnesium, Iron, and Omega-3 fatty acids.

Instead of just looking at growth charts, an integrative approach to pediatrics looks at how micro-nutrients act as the building blocks for your child's brain, gut, and immune resilience.

Today, we are kicking things off with a mighty, unsung hero: Zinc.

WHY DOES ZINC MATTER SO MUCH?

Zinc is an essential trace mineral, meaning the body cannot produce it on its own, it must come from food. It plays a foundational role in over 300 cellular processes in your child's body, including:

Immune System Defense: Zinc helps immune cells grow and fight off those stubborn daycare and school viruses.

Gut Health & Lining: Zinc is crucial for maintaining a strong, healthy intestinal lining (the "security guard" of the body), which directly impacts overall nutrient absorption and prevents systemic inflammation.

Brain & Growth: It supports cognitive development, memory, concentration, and proper physical growth spurts.

Let Food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.

-Hippocrates

SIGNS YOUR CHILD MIGHT NEED MORE ZINC

Appetite, Taste & Growth:

- Low appetite and picky eating
- Impaired taste and smell
- Failure to thrive or poor overall growth
- Pica (craving or eating non-food items)
- Delayed puberty (specifically noted in boys)

Sensory & Neurodevelopmental:

- Auditory processing or sensory sensitivities (e.g., covering ears or cannot stand loud sounds like a blender, vacuum, or a flushing toilet)
- Touch and texture sensitivity
- Attention and focus difficulties

Mood & Emotional Well-being:

- Increased irritability or anxiety
- Mood concerns like OCD and depression

Immune & Gut Health:

- Frequent infections
- Food sensitivities and leaky gut symptoms
- Chronic diarrhea
- Histamine symptoms (such as sneezing, itchy eyes/nose, hives, or reflux, etc)

Skin, Hair & Nails:

- Eczema and noticeably slow skin healing
- Thinning hair or hair loss
- Horizontal lines on the fingernails (known as Beau's lines—though these can also be triggered by localized trauma or cold exposure)
- Painful cracks in the corners of the mouth (which can also overlap with a B-vitamin or iron deficiency, or a localized yeast/bacterial infection)

FOOD FIRST: BRINGING ZINC TO THE FAMILY TABLE

Animal Proteins & Seafood

(Highly Absorbable)

- Oysters & Shellfish
- Grass-Fed Beef & Lamb
- Organic Poultry
- Eggs
- Liver

Seeds, Nuts & Plant-Based Fats

- Pumpkin & Watermelon Seeds
- Sesame Seeds
- Cashews & Peanuts

Legumes & Whole Grains

- Garbanzo Beans (Chickpeas), Lentils & Beans.
- Quinoa
- Raw Sprouts

Produce & Dairy Options

- Spinach & Garlic
- Dairy Products: if your child does not have a dairy allergy or sensitivity.

⚠ Safety Note: Always finely grind whole seeds/nuts or use smooth nut butters for infants and toddlers to avoid choking hazards.



SUMMER TIPS

Gentle Sunscreen Selections

For your child's delicate skin, I highly recommend utilizing the Environmental Working Group (EWG) Skin Deep® database or mobile app (<https://www.ewg.org/skindeep/>) as a trusted resource for evaluating product safety. When selecting a sunscreen, my professional preference is a clean, mineral-based lotion that carries an 'EWG Verified' status or a top-tier low score of '1,' utilizing non-nano zinc oxide. Excellent examples that meet these strict criteria include Earth Mama Baby Mineral Sunscreen Lotion and Butter Me Up Organics Mineral Sunscreen.

Pediatric Application Tip: Because non-nano mineral sunscreens sit physically on top of the skin, they can be thick. To avoid the "ghost face" look and make application smoother, warm a small dime-sized amount between your own palms first, then gently pat and press it onto your child's skin rather than rubbing aggressively.

COMMUNITY NOTE



At Gentle Paths Pediatrics, the greatest compliment we can receive is the trust of your family—and the referral of another. Our practice thrives on the wonderful community of parents who share our vision for holistic, root-cause, and deeply personalized pediatric care.

To show our deep appreciation for helping us grow, we are excited to introduce our new Family Referral Program:

Share the Care: When you refer a new family to Gentle Paths Pediatrics, invite them to mention your name when they reach out.

A Token of Thanks: Once that family officially signs up for a membership, we will credit a \$200 token to your account as a sincere thank you.

How to Use It: This \$200 credit can be applied directly toward your upcoming membership dues or special integrative consultation services.

We are incredibly grateful to have your family walking this path with us. If you have a friend, neighbor, or loved one looking for a more dedicated, unhurried approach to their child's health, we would be honored to care for them!



Gentle Paths Pediatrics

Rooted in Wellness, Growing with Care

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