

## Copper and Pregnancy

Copper is an essential trace element for your hair, skin and bones, as well as your central nervous and cardiovascular systems, immune and reproductive systems, and even gene transcription. It's also an enabler, helping the human body to use other minerals, such as iron.

But while copper is needed to transport iron from red blood cells into your body, too much iron can inhibit the body from using much-needed minerals—including copper. Similarly, too much zinc inhibits the body's ability to absorb copper.

According to a recent study in *BJOG: An International Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, pregnant women who take iron supplements have a greater risk of zinc and copper deficiency, which can lead to high blood pressure and smaller baby size.

The study suggests that in order to receive a recommended 2 to 3 milligrams of copper and 27 milligrams of iron per day, pregnant women would be better off skipping supplements altogether and obtaining the minerals through a properly balanced diet.

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