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*Elderly adults are increasingly susceptible to infections, oxidative stress, and immune dysfunction. According to published clinical research, supplementing with zinc for one year decreased the incidence of infections and lowered markers of oxidative stress in a group of adults aged 55-87 years.*

## SUPPLEMENTAL ZINC DECREASES INCIDENCE OF INFECTIONS IN THE ELDERLY

Adults over the age of 55 years are more susceptible to infections, immune dysfunction, increased oxidative stress, and zinc deficiency. Since zinc has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties, new research sought to determine the effect of zinc on the incidence of total infections in the elderly. Researchers also tested the effect of zinc on markers of oxidative stress.

A randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial of zinc supplementation was conducted in 50 healthy subjects of both sexes aged 55–87 years. The zinc-supplemented group received 45 mg of zinc orally for 12 months. Incidence of infections during the supplementation period was documented. Plasma zinc concentrations and markers of oxidative stress were measured at the beginning and after supplementation.

After zinc supplementation, the incidence of infections was significantly lower, plasma zinc was significantly higher, and generation of oxidative stress markers was significantly lower in the zinc-supplemented group than in the placebo group.

*Prasad AS, et al. Zinc supplementation decreases incidence of infections in the elderly: effect of zinc on generation of cytokines and oxidative stress. 2007. Am J Clin Nutr 85(3):837-44.*