

Iodine (I)



Iodine is a non-metallic element that belongs to the group of halogens, just like chlorine, bromine and fluorine. This interesting element is a blue-black solid and evaporates when heated, without becoming liquid. In nature, iodine is never found in its pure elemental form but rather as a part of several compounds found in oceans, soil and even air.

Iodine



Atomic number
protons/electrons

53

Neutrons

(most common isotope)

74

Atomic weight

(amu)

126.9

Atomic radius

(pm)

139

Functions/Health effect:

Iodine plays a crucial role in the human body as a part of two important hormones produced by the thyroid gland. These hormones are involved in everything from regulating energy levels, internal temperature to metabolism and therefore weight. Iodine deficiency not only causes the disease of thyroid gland and metabolism, but in extreme cases also permanent damage to the brain and intellect.

Sources:

Due to the huge abundance of iodine in oceans, kelp, fish, and seafood are the best sources of this trace element. Other good sources are eggs and dairy. To ensure adequate intake of iodine in general population, there is a widely accepted practice of adding iodine to table salt.

The recommended dose of iodine for an adult is 150 micrograms per day. This amount can be found in just a little over half a teaspoon of table salt or about 7 grams of dried seaweed.

Did you know that?

Iodine is used extensively in medicine, such as an antiseptic disinfectant, a contrast agent for X-ray and, in a form of potassium iodide, as a so-called radiation pill.

Iodine has 34 different isotopes, which are simply different chemical forms of the same element. All of them are radioactive except for one, which is also the only one stable and found in nature and our food.

Food
division

