



Biotin (Vitamin B7)

Overview

Biotin, also known as B7, is a water-soluble vitamin found in foods such as eggs, fish, milk, and bananas. This vitamin is important for overall health and plays a role in cell growth, carbohydrate metabolism, and fatty acid synthesis. Biotin is involved in a wide range of metabolic processes primarily related to the utilization of fats, carbohydrates, and amino acids. It also influences cell growth and may help in maintaining blood sugar levels.

Biotin is found primarily in the liver, kidney, and muscle. Biotin functions as an essential cofactor for five carboxylases that catalyze steps in fatty acid, glucose, and amino acid metabolism. Biotin is commonly supplemented for multiple conditions, such as hair loss, brittle nails, and nerve damage. Biotin is also thought to reduce inflammation, improve cognitive function, increase HDL (good) cholesterol, and decrease LDL (bad) cholesterol.

Other Uses

Biotin may improve conditions such as skin rashes, brittle nails, thinning hair, diabetes, or nerve pain.

Side Effects

Biotin has been very rarely associated with any adverse effects, even with high doses. Common side effects include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and stomach cramps. There is one case report of life-threatening eosinophilic pleuro-pericardial effusion in an elderly woman.