



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Biotin

This information describes the common uses of Biotin, how it works, and its possible side effects.

Tell your healthcare providers about any dietary supplements you're taking, such as herbs, vitamins, minerals, and natural or home remedies. This will help them manage your care and keep you safe.

What is it?

Biotin is a vitamin your body needs to process sugar and fats. It's found in foods such as organ meats (like liver or kidney), eggs, almonds, soy beans, peanuts, wholegrain cereals, brewer's yeast, and vegetables.

Biotin supplements are available as pills, soft gels or gummies. They are taken alone or combined with other vitamins for healthy skin, nails, and hair.

What are the potential uses and benefits?

Biotin is used to:

- Make brittle nails stronger
- Make hair healthy
- Treat skin rash
- Treat disability due to multiple sclerosis (a disease of the brain and

spinal cord)

- Treat nerve pain due to diabetes

While biotin has many uses, more research is needed to prove that it helps with these issues.

Biotin is generally safe. But dietary supplements can interact with some medications and affect how they work. For more information, read the “What else do I need to know?” section below.

What are the side effects?

No side effects have been reported.

What else do I need to know?

It’s important to talk to your healthcare provider before taking biotin supplements. They can cause incorrect results on some lab tests. This can affect your care by:

- Making it harder for your doctor to diagnose a disorder or disease that you may have
- Not showing how you’re responding to a treatment
- Making you go through additional testing

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you’re not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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