

## **Salt and iodine—more information** (from [www.saltmatters.org](http://www.saltmatters.org))

The recommended intake of iodine per day is 150 micrograms (mcg) for both men and women, and the World Health Organisation recommends 250 mcg for pregnancy and breastfeeding.

As all diets contain some iodine, 100 mcg/day should be an adequate supplement, raised to at least 150 mcg/day for pregnancy and breastfeeding.

### **Alternatives to iodised salt**

Seafood supplies iodine, but estimates of the dose it delivers, heavy metal contamination, how many people would eat enough seafood regularly, and the cost to lower income groups, are all considered debatable. Canned seafood contains just as much iodine as fresh, and is usually cheaper. Kelp tablets no longer declare on the label how much iodine they contain.

Some other readily available alternatives to iodised salt are:

- about a dozen brands of vitamin and mineral supplements have an adequate iodine supplement;
- the Tasmanian government gave all schoolchildren inexpensive potassium iodide tablets in the 1960s and at least one brand can be bought today (but combined with herbs that raise the price);
- the higher-dose iodine tablet for use when pregnant or breast-feeding is cheaper and you could take one every second day when not pregnant or breastfeeding;
- iodised water (Trade Mark I-CON) supplied by 4 New Elements Pty Ltd ([www.4nelements.com.au](http://www.4nelements.com.au)); unfortunately this too is expensive;
- 0.4% potassium iodide drops for use in breadmakers (see below). In 2007 the price was \$5.00 for a 15 mL dropper bottle, with postage extra at \$2 to \$3 depending on the postcode. 15 mL is enough for 150 small (700g) or 100 large (1 kg) loaves.

### **Potassium iodide drops for breadmakers**

Keep the dropper bottle in the cupboard with the water measure and add 2–3 drops to the water every time you bake a loaf (3 drops for a large loaf).

If all measurements were exact, one drop would supply 153 mcg and one 30g slice of bread would supply 15 mcg (the rate used in Tasmanian bread).



The directions are on the bottle if you buy it from Hobart by mail order. Otherwise your own pharmacist may agree to make up the drops—print the information a pharmacist will need by using this link to [pharmacists](http://www.saltmatters.org/site/uploads/PDFs/pharmacists.pdf) (<http://www.saltmatters.org/site/uploads/PDFs/pharmacists.pdf>).