Zinc deficiency and taste perception in the elderly.
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Abstract
Taste, one of the major senses in humans, is the ability to detect the flavor of substances such as food, certain minerals, and poisons. Taste distortions in human beings have been attributed to various physiological and environmental factors including aging and disease conditions. Given the fact that taste is one of the most important factors in food preference, selection, and consumption, the decreased appetite in the elderly, probably due to disease conditions, may lead to dietary restrictions that could negatively impact nutritional and health status. The role of zinc on taste distortion in the elderly population and taste impairment are described. Although several studies demonstrate the associative nature of taste degeneration with age, additional investigations are required to clarify the mechanisms by which taste perception is altered with age.

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