

# Inositol

Inositol is a B vitamin that improves depression, bipolar, binge eating, anxiety, energy, obsessive compulsive disorder, and irritability. It is a natural part of brain cell membranes. You'll find it in beans, grains, nuts, and many fruits. People with depression and bipolar tend to have decreased levels of inositol in their brains.

Inositol is vitamin B8, and is also called myo-inositol. In the brain, it helps cells to grow and develop important receptors that are crucial for healthy brain function. It does this in ways that are similar to lithium, a mineral that is very effective for depression and bipolar.

## Dosage

Dosages range from 2-25 grams/day (by comparison, the average adult gets 1 gram/day from their diet). Below are average doses by condition:

Bipolar disorder in adults: 10-16 grams qd

Bipolar disorder in children: Dose by weight and take with omega-3 fatty acids:

- Over 55 lb (25 kg): 2,000 mg daily (2 gram)
- Under 55 lb: 36.4 mg/lb (or 80 mg/kg) (round down to the nearest 500 mg)

(see [chrisaikenmd.com/supplements](http://chrisaikenmd.com/supplements) for omega-3 dosing)

Bulimia: 8 grams daily

Psoriasis on lithium: 6 grams daily

Panic disorder: 12-18 grams daily

Insomnia: 2 grams at night

Start at 3-6 grams daily and raise by 6 grams every week toward these targets (for children, start at 1/3 to 1/4 of the full dose and raise by that amount every week until you reach the target). You can take the dose all at once or divide it into 2-4 smaller doses.

## Choosing a product

Inositol is available at Amazon and most health-food stores and pharmacies, such as [drugstore.com](http://drugstore.com). The largest capsules are 1 gram, but you can also take it as a powder (add to a smoothie or yogurt).

Brands tested by independent labs include:

- Best price: Bulk Supplements (powder) or Life Extension (caps).
- Other options: NOW Foods (powder), Pure Encapsulations (powder).
- Monthly Cost: \$5-15

## Quick links to recommended products

[www.chrisaikenmd.com/supplements](http://www.chrisaikenmd.com/supplements)

## Side effects

Inositol is generally well tolerated. Possible side effects include gas, nausea, sleepiness, insomnia, dizziness, and headache.

Risks are low and include mild decreases in glucose (blood sugar) or blood pressure. It is generally in pregnancy.

## Interactions

Inositol does not interact with other medications.

## Limitations

Inositol has not been widely studied. Its safety is not regulated by the FDA.

—Chris Aiken, MD, updated 1/3/2026