

Health advice from Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora National Public Health Service

What is Manganese?

Manganese is a naturally occurring element that is present throughout the environment through air, food, soil, consumer products, and drinking water.

It is an essential nutrient and consuming a small amount of manganese is necessary to maintain your overall health.

Aside from water testing, how can I tell if Manganese is in my drinking water?

Elevated levels of manganese can make water appear discoloured and can stain clothing.

Health advice:

While the health risks are considered to be very low, if you continue to have concerns about your drinking water and it looks discoloured, consider switching to another source of clean drinking water, such as bottled water, until such time that mitigations are in place for your water supply system.

Parents/caregivers preparing infant formula could also consider switching to bottled water if their tap water is discoloured because infants are more susceptible to manganese than children and adults.

There are no known health concerns from hand washing, showering or bathing in water with elevated levels of manganese.

About Iron:

Iron is a metal found naturally in the Earth's crust. As rainwater moves through natural rock formations underground, it can dissolve iron and enter into sources of drinking water. Consuming water containing iron is not considered harmful to your health.