

Title	Analytical Evaluation of Total and Bio-accessible Metals and Metalloids in Household Spices
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Abstract	The present study aimed to assess both the total concentrations and bio-accessible fractions of selected trace elements and toxic metals in spices. A total of fifteen spices, including Achillea, anise, black seed, cinnamon, cumin, fennel, fenugreek, ginger, myrrh, rosemary, sage, sesame, thyme, turmeric, and wormwood, were analyzed. The investigated elements included essential trace elements such as copper (Cu), manganese (Mn), selenium (Se), and zinc (Zn), as well as toxic metals including aluminum (Al), cadmium (Cd), and lead (Pb). Total elemental concentrations were determined following acid digestion, while bio-accessible fractions were evaluated using infusion/extraction procedures designed to simulate human consumption conditions. The analytical results demonstrated considerable variation in elemental concentrations among the studied spices. Essential elements, particularly Mn and Zn, were present at comparatively higher concentrations, indicating that spices may contribute to dietary micronutrient intake. Toxic metals such as Cd and Pb were detected in all analyzed samples at varying levels, although most concentrations remained within internationally accepted permissible limits. Among the studied spices, thyme, myrrh, and achillea exhibited relatively elevated Pb and Al concentrations, while turmeric, rosemary, and ginger showed higher Cd levels. Bio-accessibility studies revealed that only a fraction of the total elemental content becomes available for absorption during consumption. The bio-accessible concentrations were generally lower than the total concentrations, demonstrating limited transfer of elements into infusion media. However, some spices, particularly ginger, exhibited comparatively high bio-accessibility for both essential and toxic elements, suggesting greater elemental mobility and extractability. In contrast, sesame displayed low bio-accessible fractions despite moderate total concentrations, indicating stronger retention of elements within the spice matrix.

