

Everything You Need to Know about Vitamins and Minerals



Vitamin	Why It's Needed	Where It's Found
A	Vitamin A is needed for new cell growth. Helps fight infection. Essential for healthy skin, good blood, strong bones and teeth, healthy kidneys, bladder, and lungs. Helps to maintain good eyesight.	Fish liver oils, liver, dairy products, carrots, cantaloupe, peaches, sweet potatoes, squash, tomatoes, all green and yellow fruits and vegetables.
Beta-Carotene	In addition to providing the body with a safe source of vitamin A, beta-carotene is an anti-oxidant. Beta-carotene works with other vitamins and minerals, in the body, to defend against harmful substances that can cause cancer.	Dark green leafy vegetables, yellow and orange fruits and vegetables.
Thiamine (B ₁)	Needed by the body for the proper digestion of sugar and starch for energy. Helps maintain a healthy nervous system and proper heart function. Stress increases the need for Thiamine and all B-vitamins.	Brewers yeast, wheat germ, legumes, blackstrap molasses, bran, whole brown rice, soybeans, oatmeal, whole wheat, and meats.
Riboflavin (B ₂)	Required for red blood cell formation, prevention of colds and infections, and cell growth. Important for good muscle tone. Needed for the digestion of meats, starches and fats. Aides in good vision, skin, nails, and hair.	Milk, eggs, fish, brewers yeast, green leafy vegetables, and whole grain breads.

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Niacin (B ₃)	Needed for the nervous system for function well. Needed for healthy skin and digestive system. Helps with the circulation of the blood. Needed by the body to make sex hormones. Helps lower blood lipids.	Lean meats, poultry, fish, peanuts, coffee beans, brewers yeast, wheat germ, whole wheat products, avocados, dates, figs, and prunes.

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Pantothenic Acid (B ₅)	Helps the body form hormones and fight off infections. Needed by the body for energy. Helps to maintain a healthy digestive tract, skin and nerves. Helps to convert fat and sugar to energy.	Organ meats, brewers yeast, egg yolk, whole grain cereal, chicken, bran, nuts, legumes, and mushrooms.
B ₆	Very important for a strong healthy body. Needed for the use of fat and protein (meat) by the body. Needed by the body to produce red blood cells and decrease the risk of infection. Helps the nervous system function.	Meats, whole grain products, brewers yeast, bananas, green leafy vegetables, wheat germ, pecans, eggs, milk, cabbage, garbonzo beans, and sunflower seeds.
B ₁₂	Needed for healthy blood and growth. Important for maintaining a healthy nervous system (including brain cells). Needed for digestion of food, building muscle, and using sugar and fat for energy.	Liver, kidney, meats, fish, dairy products, eggs, oysters, and Alaskan crab.
B-Complex	B-Complex is all the B-vitamins together. B-Complex vitamins are needed by the body to produce energy. Important for a normal nervous system, healthy hair, skin, eyes, liver, and digestive tract.	Brewers yeast, liver, and whole grain cereals.

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Biotin	Needed by the body so it can use fat for energy. Needed for the building of the body. Maintains healthy nerve cells, skin, hair, and bone marrow.	Liver, kidney, unpolished rice, soy flour, soy beans, egg yolk, cauliflower, and mushrooms.

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Vitamin C (ascorbic acid)	Positive effect on immune function. As an anti-oxidant, it helps to prevent cancer. Helps with wound healing, making of blood, and fighting bacteria. Its need by the body is increased with stress. <u>Helps increase the uptake of iron from food into the body.</u>	Fresh fruits and berries (especially citrus), green vegetables, onions, tomatoes, radishes, and rose hips.
Choline	Helps the nerves of the body function properly. Needed by the body to make hormones. Helps maintain normal kidney and bladder function.	Egg yolks, milk, meat, legumes, and whole grain cereals.
D	Needed by the body for the absorption of calcium. Promotes strong bones and teeth.	Egg yolk, fish (salmon is an excellent source), fish liver oil, milk and dairy products, and fortified breakfast cereals. (The best source is <u>sunlight</u>).
E (d-alpha tocopherol)	Is an anti-oxidant that helps to prevent cancer and the breakdown of many things in the body. Helps improve circulation, promotes healing, and thins blood. Is needed by red blood cells for long life.	Most vegetable oils, wheat germ, raw seeds and nuts, green leafy vegetables, meat, milk, legumes (soybeans, peas, beans), and whole wheat.
Folic Acid	This is a B-vitamin that is needed for whole body growth and development. Needed for red blood cell production and growth. Needed during pregnancy to prevent certain birth defects.	Brewers yeast, liver, spinach, oranges, peanut butter, romaine lettuce, and fortified breads and cereals.
K	Needed by body for blood clotting and normal liver function. Puts calcium bone.	Kelp, alfalfa, green vegetables, cow's milk, yogurt, polyunsaturated oils, and fish.

Mineral	Why It's Needed	Where It's Found
Calcium	Builds strong bones and teeth and is needed for muscle growth and movement. Is needed for blood clotting, normal heart beat, and normal nerve function. Will help prevent bone loss and osteoporosis.	Milk and milk products such as yogurt and cheese. Whole grains, green vegetables, sardines, salmon, kidney beans, garbonzo beans, soybeans, peanuts, and calcium-fortified orange juice.
Chromium	Is needed so the body can make fat and cholesterol. Helps bring protein to where it is needed in the body. <u>There is no proof that chromium helps with the body's use of sugar or prevents diabetes.</u>	Unsaturated fats (such as corn oil), meat, clams, brewers yeast, liver, whole grain cereal, chicken, shellfish, dried beans, seeds, wine, beer, black pepper, broccoli, and mushrooms.
Copper	Assists in the formation of hemoglobin and red blood cells. Needed for proper bone formation, healthy nerves, and overall body health.	Liver, whole grain products, almonds, green leafy vegetables, and most seafood.
Iron	Needed for the production of hemoglobin and the carrying of oxygen throughout the body. Needed for healthy blood.	Liver, lean meats, eggs, whole grain breads and cereals, fruits, vegetables, and brewers yeast.
Magnesium	Key mineral for the proper function of the body's nerves and muscles. Helps maintain the walls of the blood vessels and bone strength.	Nuts, whole grain foods, dry beans and peas, dark green vegetables, brown rice, and soy products.
Manganese	Acts to help destroy toxic substances in the body. Needed for normal bone development. Helps make sex hormones and is used by the brain and nerves for energy.	Egg yolks, sunflower seeds, wheat germ, whole grain cereals, dried peas and beans, and brewers yeast.

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Phosphorus	Need by the body for growth, repair of broken cells, and energy. Needed for strong bones, teeth, kidneys, and nerve function.	Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, whole grains, seeds, and nuts.
Potassium	Needed by the muscles, nerves, and heart for normal function. Helps to maintain blood pressure and works with sodium to control the amount of water in the body.	Vegetables (especially green leafy), figs, kidney beans, avocado, oranges, whole grains, sunflower seeds, blackstrap molasses, orange juice, potatoes, bananas, milk, sweet potatoes, and salmon.
Selenium	An anti-oxidant that helps to decrease the risk of cancer in the body. Selenium works with Vitamin E, and plays a role in the function of the thyroid and male reproductive system.	Bran, broccoli, onions, tomatoes, canned tuna, wheat germ, lean ground beef, sunflower seeds, and chicken breast.
Zinc	Needed for wound healing and the growth of new cells. Helps with the uptake of food by the body. Is needed for healthy sex organs, good night vision, taste and appetite, and aides in the defense against the common cold.	Brewers yeast, beans, nuts, seeds, wheat germ, fish, meat (especially liver), and garbonzo beans.