

Information on vitamins.

Vitamin A.

- Good for eyes, sight, skin and growth.
- Excess is harmful to pregnant women who should avoid vitamin A rich foods.
- ✓ Good sources:
 - Liver.
 - Cod liver oil.
 - Butter.
 - Double cream.
 - Cheese.

Vitamin D.

- Aids absorption of calcium and phosphorus so is good for bones.
- Can cause kidney damage in excess.
- ✓ Good sources:
 - Sunlight.
 - Cod liver oil.
 - Kippers.
 - Tinned red salmon.
 - Pilchards.

The majority of us get our entire vitamin D requirements just by going outside. Care may be needed to ensure that people who are housebound get an adequate supply from their diet.

Vitamin E.

- Protects cells from oxidation.
- Protects against heart disease.
- Aids immune system.
- Helps healing of wounds.
- ✓ Good sources:
 - Wheat germ oil.
 - Sunflower oil.
 - Polyunsaturated spread.
 - Sunflower seeds.

Vitamin K.

- Essential for blood clotting.
- ✓ Good sources:
 - Dark green, leafy vegetables.
 - Fruit / vegetable skins.
 - Can be manufactured in the body.

Vitamin C.

- Helps to maintain a healthy immune system.
- Necessary for building connective tissue, bones and teeth.
- Aids absorption of iron.
- ✓ Good sources:
 - Peppers (esp. red).
 - Blackcurrants.
 - Spring greens.
 - Strawberries.
 - Kale.

Vitamin B1.

- Releases energy from carbohydrates.
- Helps glucose supply to brain and nerves.
- ✓ Good sources:
 - Quorn chunks.
 - Yeast extract.
 - Ready Brek.
 - Bacon.

Vitamin B2.

- Releases energy from fat and protein.
- Maintains healthy skin and mucous membrane.
- ✓ Good sources:
 - Yeast extract.
 - Liver.
 - Fortified breakfast cereals.

Vitamin B3.

- Helps energy release from food.
- Excess can cause liver damage.
- ✓ Good sources:
 - Yeast extract.
 - Chicken breast.
 - Liver.

Vitamin B6.

- Necessary for healthy blood.
- High levels may cause nerve damage.
- ✓ Good sources:
 - Wheat germ.
 - Turbot.
 - Fruit 'n' fibre.
 - All-bran.

Vitamin B12.

- Necessary for blood cells and nerves.
- Vegans may need supplements.
- ✓ Good sources:
 - Liver.
 - Mussels.
 - Sardines.
 - Herring.

Lack of this vitamin has been linked to dementia in alcoholics. Excess alcohol consumption prevents its absorption. Sufferers may benefit from supplements.

Folic acid.

- Necessary for formation of blood cells.
- Essential for infant development – pregnant women are advised to take supplements.
- ✓ Good sources:
 - Offal.
 - Leafy, green vegetables. Fortified breakfast cereals.

Information on minerals.

There are 15 minerals necessary for health, they are:

Calcium, magnesium, potassium, sodium, phosphorus, iron, zinc, selenium, copper, fluoride, chloride, iodine, manganese, chromium and cobalt.

Minerals have three main functions; they form parts of bones and teeth; they regulate bodily fluids and they are ingredients in the enzymes and hormones which regulate and control bodily functions.

Calcium.

- Major constituent of bones and teeth.
- Bodies contain around a kilo of calcium, to maintain this we need a gram a day.
- We only absorb about 40% of the calcium we eat each day.

✓ Good sources:

- Cheese.
- Yoghurt.
- Milk.
- Dark green, leafy vegetables.
- White bread (fortified).
- Tinned fish (if the bones are eaten).

Iron.

- Carries oxygen from the lungs to the body.
- Lack of iron leads to anaemia.
- Menstruating women need extra iron.
- Vitamin C aids absorption so eat iron and vitamin C rich foods together.

✓ Good sources:

- Offal.
- Red meats.
- Dark green vegetables.
- Pulses.
- Whole grains.
- Nuts and seeds.
- Fortified breakfast cereals.

Zinc.

- Essential for normal growth and development.
- Needed for a healthy reproductive system, fertility and foetal development.
- Helps skin health and wound healing.
- Heavy smokers and drinkers may be at risk from zinc deficiency.

✓ Good sources:

- Meat.
- Dairy products.
- Whole grains.
- Pulses.

Selenium.

- Helps protect against heart disease and cancers.
- Works with vitamin E.
- Supplements may reduce pain and inflammation in rheumatoid arthritis sufferers.

✓ Good sources:

- Brazil nuts.
- Lambs kidneys / liver.
- Lentils.
- Tuna.
- Sardines.

Selenium is found in plants and plant eating animals, amounts will depend on the soil they grew in or grazed on.

Magnesium.

- Works with calcium to ensure healthy bones.
- Helps maintain a healthy heart.
- Absorption may be affected by heavy drinking.

✓ Good sources:

- Whole grains.
- Nuts and seeds.
- Green vegetables.

- Tap water in hard water areas.

Potassium.

- Works with sodium to regulate body fluids.
- Increasing potassium intake and reducing sodium can lower high blood pressure.

✓ Good sources:

- Dried fruits.
- Pulses.
- Nuts.
- Potatoes.
- Bananas.
- Garlic and onions.

Sodium.

- Salt is sodium chloride, most of us get far more than we need.
- High intake is linked to heart disease and high blood pressure.
- Most processed foods contain high amounts of salt.
- Consider cutting down on the amount of salt you add to foods and choose low salt products.