

WHY DO I NEED VITAMINS?

WHAT IS GOOD NUTRITION?

- Nutrition is to get the necessary materials in the form of food to the cells in your body to support life.
- A healthy diet is one that helps to maintain or improve health and therefore means we need to eat or take the appropriate amounts of all nutrients and water our body needs.



WHY DO WE NEED TO FEED OUR BODIES?

Many common health problems can be prevented or alleviated through adopting a healthy lifestyle and diet. The opposite is also true - a poor or unhealthy diet can have a bad impact on health. For instance, lack of vitamin C can cause a deficiency disease called scurvy. Health-threatening conditions like obesity can occur if we eat too much food and common chronic diseases such as diabetes and osteoporosis can occur if we do not get the correct amount of certain nutrients.

WHICH VITAMINS AND HOW MUCH?

- We need to get vitamins from the food we eat except vitamin D that is made in the body.
- Fresh fruit, vegetables, fish, meat and nuts are generally considered as good sources of vitamins.

However, how much fish and how much vegetables will provide what we need to maintain health?

The easiest way to solve the problem is to take a multivitamin to ensure an adequate amount of each vitamin.

ARE THERE ENOUGH VITAMINS IN OUR DIET?

- The question needs to be asked, is it really possible to consume the appropriate amounts of nutrients and water to sustain and improve health?
- External and internal factors will influence how much nutrients we actually need.
- External influences
 - Lifestyle: activity levels, quality of food, working hours, stress, pollution, cooking methods
- Internal factors
 - Human factors: age, genetics, illness, medical conditions, culture

Just looking at all the variables above, you will realise that to know exactly how much you need to eat of what foods is going to be rather difficult.



VIT	FUNCTION	NATURAL SOURCE
-----	----------	----------------

A	Build healthy eyes, growth and bone development	Carrots, pumpkin, yellow/orange fruit, beet, greens, fish, eggs, tuna
B1	Carbohydrate metabolism, energy production, normal nerve function	Whole grains, rice bran, lean meat, peas, beans, oranges, poultry
B2	Energy production, red blood cell formation	Fortified grains and cereals, leafy green vegetables, poultry, fish, yogurt, milk, cheese
B3	Energy release from carbohydrates, fats and proteins, promotes healthy skin	Fortified breads and cereals, brewer's yeast, broccoli, carrots, cheese, dates, eggs, fish, milk, potatoes, peanuts, tomatoes, tuna, veal, beef liver, chicken breast
B5	Energy release from foods, synthesis of other substances	Lean meat, whole grain cereals, fish, legumes
B6	Protein metabolism, nervous system functioning, hormone synthesis, red blood cell synthesis	Wholegrain breads & cereals, fish, chicken, bananas
B7	Metabolism of carbohydrate, fat & protein synthesis	Legumes, nuts
B9	Red blood cell formation, DNA synthesis, protein synthesis	Fortified cereals, beans, leafy green vegetables, beef, lamb, brown rice, liver, milk, cheese, mushrooms, oranges
B12	Fatty acid breakdown, healthy nervous system, normal growth, red blood cell production	Ham, crab, salmon, tuna, lean beef, liver, low fat dairy products
C	Formation of connective tissue, bones and teeth	Citrus fruits, strawberries, broccoli, melons, peppers, onions, radishes, watercress
D	Normal bone growth and tooth function, facilitates calcium and phosphorus absorption	Sun exposure, salmon, sardines, herring, liver, cod liver oil, tuna, margarine, fortified milk and cereals
E	Antioxidant, protects body cells, maintain normal red blood cells	Whole grains, wheat germ, nuts, spinach, sunflower seeds
K	Essential in coagulation (blood clotting) process	Leafy green vegetables, broccoli, cauliflower

CONCLUSION

As vitamins are very important and you need to get the right amount of each vitamin, consider taking a good multivitamin every day to reduce and prevent the development of certain chronic diseases.

DISCLAIMER

TAKE NOTE

The information provided in this article is for education purposes only and does not serve as a medical diagnosis. Members should always consult their healthcare provider with serious symptoms.

Please note that Heritage Health plans do not necessarily cover the costs of the condition/s described.

