

Vitamin and Mineral Table

What foods? How does it help?

Vitamin/Mineral	Found in	RDA ^a	What it does
Vitamin A (Retinol or Beta-carotene)	Liver, egg yolk, dairy products, margarine. Beta carotene (pro-vitamin A) is found in dark green and deep yellow fruits and vegetables.	5,000 IU ^b	Keeps eyes healthy; develops bones; protects linings of respiratory, digestive and urinary tracts; maintains healthy skin and hair. Beta carotene fights free radicals (chemicals that damage cells).
Vitamin B ₁ (Thiamine)	Whole grains, cereals and enriched grain products; also legumes (dried beans, peas, and nuts), organ meats, lean pork and eggs.	1.1 - 1.5 mg	Promotes healthy functioning of the nerves, muscles and heart. Metabolizes carbohydrates.
Vitamin B ₂ (Riboflavin)	Organ meats, enriched breads and cereals, legumes, almonds, cheese and eggs; also meat, fish and dark green vegetables.	1.3 - 1.7 mg	Metabolizes carbohydrates, fats and proteins, produces hormones; promotes eye and skin health.
Vitamin B ₃ (Niacin)	Meat, organ meats, whole grains and cereals, and legumes; also eggs, milk, green leafy vegetables and fish.	15 - 19 mg	Metabolizes carbohydrates and fats; helps functioning of digestive system; maintains health skin.
Vitamin B ₅ (Pantothenic Acid)	Organ meats, yeast, raw vegetables, eggs and dairy products.	None; 4 - 7 mg suggested	Produces hormones and maintains body's immune system.
Vitamin B ₆ (Pyridoxine)	Whole-grain products, poultry, fish, and nuts; also meat, most fruits and vegetables, eggs and dairy products	1.6 - 2 mg	Metabolizes protein; helps produce hemoglobin; promotes functioning of digestive and nervous systems, and healthy skin.
Vitamin B ₁₂ (Cyanocobalamin)	Primarily organ meats; also fish, lean meats, poultry, cheese, and eggs.	2 µg	Builds genetic material of cells and produces blood cells.
Vitamin C (Ascorbic Acid)	Almost exclusively fruits and vegetables (especially citrus fruits, tomatoes, peppers, strawberries, and	100 - 200 mg	An antioxidant, fights and resists infection; heals wounds; promotes growth and maintenance of bones, teeth, gums,

	cantaloupe) although breast milk and organ meats contain small amounts.		ligaments and blood vessels.
Vitamin D (Cholecalciferol)	For most people, sun exposure is the primary source of vitamin D. Food sources include Vitamin D-fortified milk, eggs, fish-liver oils and fatty fish such as herring, mackerel and salmon.	400 IU	Builds strong bones and teeth and maintains the nervous system.
Vitamin E (Tocopherol)	vegetable oils, nuts, wheat germ and whole-wheat products, egg yolks and green leafy vegetables.	Women 8 mg; Men 10 mg	Protects the lungs, nervous system, skeletal muscle and the eye's retina from damage by free radicals; may reduce risk of heart disease by protecting against atherosclerosis.
Vitamin H (Biotin)	Oats, organ meats, yeast and eggs (cooked); also whole-wheat products, dairy products, fish and tomatoes.	None; 30 - 200 µg suggested	Metabolizes proteins and carbohydrates; breaks down fatty acids.
Vitamin K	Dark green leafy vegetables, eggs, cheese, pork and liver.	60 - 80 mg	Promotes normal blood-clotting.
Vitamin M (Folic Acid)	vegetables (especially dark-green ones), organ meats, whole-wheat products, legumes and mushrooms.	180 - 200 µg	Synthesis of protein and genetic materials; may help prevent some cancers, heart disease and stroke; when taken during pregnancy, protects against some birth defects.
Calcium (Ca)	Primarily in milk and dairy products; also dark-green vegetables, legumes, shellfish, fish with edible bones and tofu; also calcium-fortified orange juice.	800 - 1,200 mg	Builds bones and teeth; promotes blood clotting, contraction of muscles and nerve impulses.
Chromium (Cr)	Whole wheat and other whole grains and molasses.	None; 50 - 200 µg suggested	An essential nutrient required for normal sugar and fat metabolism; may also help prevent high cholesterol and atherosclerosis.
Copper (Cu)	Organ meats, shellfish,	None;	Builds bones, red blood

	whole-grain products, legumes and dried fruits.	2 - 3 mg suggested	cells and hemoglobin; metabolizes iron, maintains connective tissue and blood vessels; may play a role in cancer prevention.
Fluoride (F)	Seafood, tea, coffee and soybeans; sodium fluoride is often added to the water supply to prevent tooth decay.	None	Promotes bone and tooth formation; prevents tooth decay.
Iodine (I ₂)	Saltwater fish, shellfish, sea kelp and iodized salt.	150 µg	Helps produce thyroid hormones; adequate iodine intake during pregnancy is crucial to normal fetal development.
Iron (Fe)	Iron is poorly absorbed from food. The richest sources are red meat and organ meats; other sources include whole-wheat products, shellfish, nuts and dried fruit. Many breads and cereals are enriched with iron. Vitamin C aids absorption of iron and is often added to iron supplements.	Women 15 mg; Men 10 mg	Helps produce hemoglobin and red blood cells; delivers oxygen to muscles and other body tissues; protects against effects of stress
Magnesium (Mg)	Legumes, whole-grain cereals, nuts and dark-green vegetables; also meat, seafood and dairy products.	Women 280 mg; Men 350 mg	Builds bones and teeth; involved in functioning of muscular and nervous systems and hear and circulatory system.
Manganese (Mn)	Tea, green vegetables, legumes, oats and rice.	2 - 5 mg	Involved in reproductive processes, sex hormone formation; essential for normal brain function and bone development.
Molybdenum (Mo)	Dairy products, legumes, whole-grain cereals and organ meats.	75 - 250 mg	Involved in enzyme activities.
Phosphorus (P)	Meat, fish, eggs, legumes and dairy products; also whole wheat, corn and rice.	1 gram	Builds bones and teeth.
Potassium (K)	Potatoes, dried fruits, bananas, legumes, raw vegetables, avocados and mushrooms; also lean meat, milk and fish.	None; 3.5 grams suggested	Helps nerves and muscles function; regulates heart's rhythm; regulates bodily fluids.

Selenium (Se)	Whole-grain cereals, fish and shellfish, meat and dairy products.	Women 55 µg; Men 70 µg	An antioxidant, helps protect cells and tissues from damage by free radicals; may also protect against some cancers.
Sodium (Na)	Naturally in many foods and is added to many prepared foods.	2,400 mg	Maintains body's fluid balance; important for nerve function and muscle contraction; controls heart's rhythm.
Zinc (Zn)	Shellfish (particularly oysters), organ meats and lean red meat, yeast, whole-grain cereals, and legumes.	Women 12 mg; Men 15 mg	Involved in growth, skin health and wound healing, development of the reproductive organs, protein metabolism and energy production.

^aRecommended Dietary Allowances

^bInternational Units

For more information go to The American Society for Nutritional Sciences [Nutrient Information](#).

Old Things Forgotten Home Page