

vitamins and minerals chart

your guide to the essential vitamins and minerals for a healthy life



| vitamins | what it does | food source | mineral | what it does | food source |
|---|--|--|-------------------|--|--|
| vitamin A | Vitamin A prevents eye problems, promotes a healthy immune system, is essential for the growth and development of cells, and keeps skin healthy. | Milk, eggs, liver, fortified cereals, darkly coloured orange or green vegetables (carrots, sweet potatoes and pumpkin), orange fruits such as cantaloupe, apricots, peaches, papayas, and mangoes. | calcium | Vital for building strong bones and teeth. The time to build strong bones is during childhood and the teen yrs, to fight against bone loss later in life. Weak bones are susceptible to osteoporosis, causing bones to break easily. | Milk and other dairy products – such as yogurt, cheese, and cottage cheese – are good sources of calcium. Also broccoli and dark green, leafy vegetables, soy foods and foods fortified with calcium. |
| vitamin C (ascorbic acid) | Vitamin C is needed to form collagen, tissue that holds cells together. It's essential for healthy bones, teeth, gums, and blood vessels. It helps the body absorb iron and calcium and contributes to brain function. | You'll find high levels of vitamin C in red berries, kiwi, red and green capsicums, tomatoes, broccoli, spinach, and juices made from guava, grapefruit, and oranges. | iron | Iron helps red blood cells carry oxygen to all parts of the body. Symptoms of iron-deficiency anemia include weakness and fatigue, lightheadedness, and shortness of breath. | Iron-rich foods include red meat, pork, fish and shellfish, poultry, lentils, beans and soy foods, green leafy vegetables, and raisins. Some flours, cereals, and grain products are also fortified with iron. |
| vitamin D | Vitamin D strengthens bones because it helps the body absorb bone-building calcium. | This vitamin is unique - your body manufactures it when you get sunlight on your skin. Vitamin D is also found in egg yolks, fish oils, and fortified foods like milk. | magnesium | Magnesium helps muscles and nerves function, steadies the heart rhythm, and keeps bones strong. It also helps the body create energy and make proteins. | You get magnesium from whole grains and whole-grain breads, nuts and seeds, green leafy vegetables, potatoes, beans, avocados, bananas, kiwi, broccoli, prawns and chocolate. |
| vitamin E | Vitamin E is an antioxidant and helps protect cells from damage. It is also important for the health of red blood cells. | Vitamin E is found in many foods, such as vegetable oils, nuts, and green leafy vegetables. Avocados, wheat germ, and whole grains are also good sources. | phosphorus | Phosphorus helps form healthy bones and teeth. It also helps the body make energy. It is part of every cell membrane, and every cell in the body needs phosphorus to function normally. | Phosphorus is found in most foods, but the best sources are dairy foods, meat, and fish. |
| vitamin B12 | Vitamin B12 helps to make red blood cells, and is important for nerve cell function. | Vitamin B12 is found naturally in fish, red meat, poultry, milk, cheese, and eggs. It's also added to some breakfast cereals. | potassium | Potassium helps with muscle and nervous system function. It also helps the body maintain the balance of water in the blood and body tissues. | Potassium is found in broccoli, potatoes (with skins), green leafy vegetables, citrus fruits, bananas, dried fruits, and legumes such as peas and lima beans. |
| vitamin B6 | Vitamin B6 is important for normal brain and nerve function. It also helps the body break down proteins and make red blood cells. | A wide variety of foods contain vitamin B6, including potatoes, bananas, beans, seeds, nuts, red meat, poultry, fish, eggs, spinach, and fortified cereals. | zinc | Zinc is important for normal growth, strong immunity, and wound healing. | You'll find zinc in red meat, poultry, oysters and other seafood, nuts, dried beans, soy foods, milk and other dairy products, whole grains, and fortified breakfast cereals. |
| thiamin (vitamin B1) | Thiamin helps the body convert carbohydrates into energy and is necessary for the heart, muscles, and nervous system to function properly. | People get thiamin from many different foods, including fortified breads, cereals, and pasta; meat and fish; dried beans, soy foods, and peas; and whole grains like wheat germ. | | | |
| niacin (vitamin B3) | Niacin helps the body turn food into energy. It helps maintain healthy skin and is important for nerve function. | You'll find niacin in red meat, poultry, fish, fortified hot and cold cereals, and peanuts. | | | |
| riboflavin (vitamin B2) | Riboflavin is essential for turning carbohydrates into energy and producing red blood cells. It is also important for vision. | Some of the best sources of riboflavin are meat, eggs, legumes (like peas and lentils), nuts, dairy products, green leafy vegetables, broccoli, asparagus, and fortified cereals. | | | |
| folate (vitamin B9, folic acid or folacin) | Folate helps the body make red blood cells. It is also needed to make DNA. | Dried beans and other legumes, green leafy vegetables, asparagus, oranges and other citrus fruits, and poultry are good sources of this vitamin. So are fortified or enriched bread, noodles, and cereals. | | | |