

# Nutrition Facts

## Vitamin A to Zinc

Vitamins and minerals play an essential role in the body. Our body uses vitamins and minerals to help convert energy from carbohydrates, protein, and fat into fuel for our body. Many individuals are firm believers in taking vitamins everyday, for a variety of reasons. Today, consumers are faced with messages about vitamins and minerals through popular media and internet, and many of these messages promote the necessity to take supplements. Supplements are not recommended for everyone. In fact, most people who eat a balanced diet containing foods from all food groups are most likely meeting their needs for vitamins and minerals. It is best to speak to your doctor or other health care professional before you consider taking a supplement of any kind.

### Supplement Misconception

#### Supplement Misconception

There are many reasons why people decide to take supplements – outlined below are a few reasons:

<input type="checkbox"/>	To improve nutrition	<input type="checkbox"/>	To fill a gap between dietary intake and actual need
<input type="checkbox"/>	A belief that more is better	<input type="checkbox"/>	To make up for nutrients missing from the food supply
<input type="checkbox"/>	To decrease susceptibility to or severity of chronic disease	<input type="checkbox"/>	To make up for poor absorption of vitamins and minerals from foods
<input type="checkbox"/>	To help manage stress	<input type="checkbox"/>	To increase energy or boost performance

### Who may benefit from a vitamin and mineral supplement?

- Exclusively breast fed infants
- Reproductive age women
- Post-menopausal women
- Teenagers with irregular eating habits
- Vegetarians/vegans
- Dieters and people who avoid entire food groups
- People with deficiency disease and absorptive disorders
- Men and women older than 50



### Vitamin and Mineral Facts:

- Fat soluble vitamins include: vitamins A, D, E and K
- Water soluble vitamins include vitamin C and the B vitamins
- Individuals who smoke tend to “use up” vitamin C more quickly than non-smokers. Recommendations for vitamin C: adult females = 75 mg/day, adult males = 90 mg/day, and smokers require an additional 30 mg/day
- Certain cooking methods can retain more vitamins and minerals. Use methods such as steaming, microwaving, or sautéing. Overcooking or boiling tends to deplete the food of its nutrients.
- Vitamin D, calcium, magnesium, and phosphorus are important nutrients for bone health
- Vitamin C, vitamin D, and fluoride are essential for good oral health
- Iron is an important mineral for oxygen transport and other metabolic processes
- Iron absorption is reduced by calcium; so if taking an iron supplement, be sure to avoid taking calcium-rich foods as the same time.

## What Can YOU Do?

Here are some examples of food sources of vitamins and minerals. Use this as a guide so that can make nutritious choices and ensure a good balance of vitamins and minerals.

<b>Vitamin or Mineral</b>	<b>Food Sources</b>
Vitamin A	Liver, meat, fish, poultry, eggs. Provitamin A in bright orange and yellow fruits and vegetables, and dark green leafy vegetables. Also in fortified milk and margarine.
Vitamin B6	Meat, fish, poultry, organ meats, enriched cereals, beans, lentils, potatoes, bananas, melon
Vitamin B12	Found only in animal products such as meat, fish, poultry, eggs, milk, cheese and cheese and milk products. Also found in foods fortified with vitamin B12 such as rice and soy beverages, and soy-based meat substitutes.
Vitamin C	Oranges and orange juice, grapefruit and grapefruit juice, apple juice, kiwi fruit, strawberries; red, yellow, green peppers; broccoli, Brussels sprouts, potatoes and tomatoes.
Calcium	Milk and dairy products, fortified soy beverages, canned salmon/sardines with bones, sesame seeds, cooked beans, tofu with calcium sulfate, almonds, bok choy, kale, broccoli.
Vitamin D	Fish liver oils, fish including salmon, mackerel, sardines, tuna; fortified milk
Vitamin E	Sunflower seeds, nuts, vegetable oils, sweet potato, papaya, peanut butter, avocado, wheat germ
Folate	Liver, beans, lentils, asparagus, spinach, romaine lettuce, Brussels sprouts, beets, broccoli, corn, green peas, oranges and orange juice, canned pineapple juice, melon, sunflower seeds, nuts, peanut butter, wheat germ; enriched breads, cereals, pastas; fortified flour, corn meal and rice.
Iron	Heme iron from muscle of meat, fish, poultry; enriched grains; absorption of non-heme iron increased by vitamin C.
Vitamin K	Green leafy vegetables, broccoli, some fermented soy products
Zinc	Meats, eggs, seafood, whole grains, nuts, and legumes.

### **ACTION PLAN**

3 Things I plan to do to follow this advice:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

***“This information is not meant to replace the medical counsel of your doctor or individual consultation with a Registered Dietitian”***

Contact an EatRight Ontario! Registered Dietitian at 1-877-510-5102 or [www.eatrightontario.ca](http://www.eatrightontario.ca) if you have more questions.

References: Dietitians of Canada (Dietary Supplements Online Professional Development Program), Health Canada.

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