# Why Vitamins?

DOYLESTOWN (Montgomery Co.) — Vitamins are only one group of nutrients we need daily. The other five nutrients are: carbohydrates, fats, protein, minerals and water. Carbohydrates, fats and protein give us calories (or energy) for our bodies. Vitamins, minerals and water do not give us calories (energy), but rather help the other three nutrients do their jobs properly.

Vitamins were first discovered in the late 1800s when scientists noticed that animals became ill if certain types of foods were missing from their diets. It has taken science decades to discover how each of the vitamins work and how much is needed every day to stay healthy. It is known that we need only very small amounts

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Available

every day to stay healthy. A meal plan, which includes a variety of foods will provide the proper amounts of vitamins.

A Quick Lesson on Viamins

Vitamins are grouped according to their abiltiy to dissolve in water or in fats. The fat-soluble vitamins are A, D, E, and K. FAtsoluble vitamins are storedi n the body and need not be replaced daily. The water-soluble are C, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, B-6, B-12, folacin, panthothentic acid, and biotin. Water-soluble vitamins need to be replaced daily because they are not stored in the body. They are also easily destroyed by cooking.

Vitamin A is necessary for new cell growth and healthy tissues and is essential for vision in dim

light. It also helps provide normal bone development and influences normal tooth formation. Some food sources are carrots, leafy green vegetables, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, winter squash, apricots, and cantaloupe.

Vitamin D aids in the absorption of calcium and phosphorus in bone and tooth formation. To accomplish this, the body through the liver and the kidneys converts the vitamin to a hormone-like material. Some food sources are vitamin D fortified dairy products, fortified margarines, liver, egg yolk, salmon, tuna fish, sardines. Vitamin D can also be formed in the skin by limited exposure to sunlight.

Vitamin E in humans acts as an "antioxidant" that helps to pervent oxygen from destroying other substances in the body. In other words, Vitamin E is a preservative

of the body's cells. Abundant sources of vegetable oils, beans, eggs, wheat germ, liver, green leafy vegetables, and nuts.

Vitamin K aids in producing the substance which helps clot blood. It is found in spinach, lettuce, kale, cabbage, cauliflower, liver, and egg yolk. It is also made in the intestinal tract by bacteria.

Vitamin C (ascorbic acid) promotes growth and tissue repair including the healing of wounds. It also aids in tooth and bone formation and in the absorption of iron. Abundant sources are citrus fruits. strawberries, tomatoes, turnip greens, green pepper, kale, broccoli and other vegetables.

Thiamin (B-1) is needed for normal digestion, growth, normal functioning of nerve tissue, and the processing of carbohydratews. Thiamin is abundant in pork,

legumes, nuts, and enriched, whole-grain breads and cereals.

Riboflavin (B-2) helps the body obtain energy from carbohydrates and proteins. This vitamin is abundant in leafy green vegetables, enriched and whole-grain breads, liver, cheese, lean meats, milk and

Niacin is necessary for the healthy condition of all tissue cells. It promotes healthy skin, nerves, and digestive tract. The most abundant sources are fish, liver, lean meats, legumes. enriched grain products.

Vitamin B-6 is mostly involved with the proper use of protein in the body. It also is needed for the proper growth and maitnenace of body functions. It is found in meat, poultry, fish, shellfish, green, leafy vegetables, whole grains, and legumes.

Vitamin B-12 is needed for the normal development of red blood cells, and the functioning of all cells, especially in the bone marrow, nervous system, and intestines. Dietary sources include organ meats, lean meats, fish, milk, eggs, and shellfish.

Folacin helps the body make red blood cells and is essential in normal metabolism which is, basically, the conversion of food to energy. The most abundant sources are liver, navy beans, and dark green leafy vegetables.

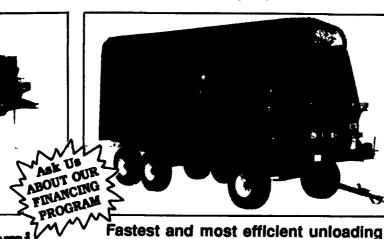




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