



Nutrients the Body Needs

BENEFITS, DEFICIENCIES, AND FOOD SOURCES

Antioxidants

Benefits: inhibit/regulate formation of free radicals, prevent/slow damage to cells caused by free radicals

Food Sources: pecans, blueberries, kale, strawberries, artichoke, raspberries, beetroot, spinach

Calcium

Benefits: bone health; assists muscles to move and nerves to carry messages; releases hormones/enzymes, blood coagulation)

Deficiency: muscle cramps, fatigue, lack of appetite

Food Sources: sesame seeds, chia seeds, parmesan cheese, cottage cheese, yogurt, sardines, beans and lentils, almonds, spinach, kale, collard greens, rhubarb

Choline

Benefits: essential for brain health and nervous system function – memory and learning

Deficiency: low energy levels, memory loss, cognitive decline

Food Sources: egg yolk, beef, chicken breast, salmon, wheat germ, maitake mushrooms, chickpeas, lima beans

Copper

Benefits: ensures proper functioning of nervous system, musculoskeletal system, immune system, creation of red blood cells

Deficiency: at risk of problems with connective tissue, muscle weakness, low white blood cell count, neurological problems

Food Sources: oysters, sunflower seeds, peanut butter, almonds, chickpeas, kale, spinach, avocado, shiitake mushrooms, sun-dried tomatoes, dark chocolate, quinoa

Folate/Folic Acid

Benefits: essential for the body to make DNA/RNA, metabolize amino acid

Food Sources: edamame, lentils, asparagus, spinach, broccoli, avocados, mangos, lettuce, sweet corn, oranges, kale, arugula, bananas, papaya, strawberries

Iron

Benefits: needed for hemoglobin – enables blood cells to carry oxygen

Deficiency: anemia; fatigue or shortness of breath

Food Sources: brown rice, soybean, beef, chicken, eggs, shrimp, tuna, scallops, spinach, sweet potato, peas, broccoli, string beans, kale, whole wheat bread

Magnesium

Benefits: helps muscles and nerves – keeps bones strong, heart-healthy, and blood sugar normal

Deficiency: poor appetite, cramps, muscle cramps, high blood pressure

Food Sources: dark chocolate, spinach, almonds, hemp seeds, chia seeds, brazil nuts, oats, avocado, bananas, potatoes, peanuts, cashews, kidney beans, tofu, guava, kiwi, papaya, blackberries, raspberries, cantaloupe, grapefruit

Omega-3

Benefits: anti-inflammatory, lower blood pressure, supports brain and heart functions

Deficiency: rough, scaly skin, dermatitis

Food Sources: linseed oil, salmon, chia seed, flax seed, walnuts, canola, shellfish, sardines

Omega-6

Benefits: helps lower LDL cholesterol, help keep blood sugar in check, activate immunesystem

Food Sources: safflower, walnuts, sunflower seeds, tofu, grapeseed oil, pecans, natural peanut butter, almonds, cashews, avocado

Phosphorus

Benefits: helps muscles contract, removes waste from kidneys, healthy nerve conduction, making DNA/RNA

Deficiency: muscle weakness, fatigue, appetite loss, irritability

Food Sources: pumpkin seeds, yellowfin tuna, lean pork, low-fat milk, lentils, quinoa, firm tofu, carrots, kale, spinach, black currants, raspberries, raisins, apricots

Potassium

Benefits: regulates fluid balance, muscle contractions, nerve signals

Deficiency: abnormal nerve functions affecting touch and muscle control

Food Sources: kale, spinach, collard greens, white beans, avocados, potatoes, acorn squash, mushrooms, bananas, cooked tomatoes, artichoke, salmon

Vitamin A

Benefits: normal growth, cell function – production of red blood cells, eye health, immune function

Deficiency: at risk for vision problems, impaired immune function

Food Sources: spinach, carrot, poblano peppers, butternut squash, pumpkin, sweet potato, broccoli, red pepper, mango, cantaloupe

Vitamin B12

Benefits: helps keep body's nerve and blood cells healthy, proper red blood cell production, metabolism

Deficiency: exhaustion, brain fog, lack of oxygen transported within the body

Food Sources: lamb liver, beef, milk, salmon, Swiss cheese, soy milk, eggs, spinach

Vitamin B6

Benefits: helps turn food into energy, important for healthy brain development, keeps nervous and immune systems functioning properly

Deficiency: mood changes, weakened immune function, fatigue, low energy

Food Sources: turkey breast, grass-fed beef, pistachio nuts, tuna, avocado, chicken breast, sunflower seeds, chickpeas, whole wheat, brown rice, bananas, sweet potato, spinach, red bell pepper

Vitamin C

Benefits: growth and development of body tissue; formation of collagen, absorption of iron, immune function, wound healing

Deficiency: weakness, fatigue, sore arms/legs

Food Sources: guava, kiwi, bell peppers, strawberries, oranges, papaya, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cooked cabbage, tomato juice

Vitamin D

Benefits: needed for strong bones; helps absorb calcium and phosphorus, facilitates normal immune system function

Deficiency: muscle weakness, pain, fatigue, depression

Food Sources: wild-caught fish, beef liver, egg yolk, shiitake mushrooms, milk, yogurt, fortified orange juice

Zinc

Benefits: benefits immune system and metabolism function

Deficiency: decreased immune function

Food Sources: oysters, beef, lamb, spinach, pumpkin seeds, squash, dark chocolate, pork, chicken