

# vitaMin

Vital health information in a minute!

How healthy is your diet? Do you look for foods high in nutrients and low in fat and calories? A healthy diet and a physically active life provide the best formula for wellness, disease prevention and good health. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans indicates that many adults lack seven essential nutrients, from calcium to fiber. See how you stack up.



## 1. Calcium for strong muscles and bones

Calcium keeps your bones strong and helps maintain normal heart rhythm and muscle function. Check the labels for the amount of calcium per dose.

### Daily needs:

- Ages 19–50: 1,000 milligrams
- Ages 51 and older: 1,200 milligrams

### Three healthy sources (contain 300 milligrams per serving):

- 8 ounces (1 cup) of skim milk or low-fat yogurt
- 8 ounces (1 cup) calcium-added orange juice
- 1 1/2 ounces hard cheese

Calcium is best absorbed in the presence of lactose, which is a natural milk sugar.

## 2. Fiber for overall health

Fiber-rich foods lower the risk of developing chronic conditions like heart disease and type 2 diabetes. Fiber is filling, relatively low in calories and can help with weight control. Check packaging for fiber content per serving.

### Daily needs:

- Men ages 19–50: 38 grams
- 51 and older: 30 grams
- Women ages 19–50: 25 grams
- 51 and older: 21 grams

### Three healthy sources:

- Snack on fruit, vegetables or low-fat popcorn (a whole grain) instead of cookies, candy and chips
- Choose whole-grain breads, crackers, cereals and pasta
- Include fruits and vegetables at every meal

## 3. Vitamin A for healthy eyes

The body converts carotenoids to vitamin A, and most people don't get enough carotenoids. Vitamin A is essential for normal vision, tissue growth and proper immune function. There is no daily requirement for carotenoids.

### Three healthy sources: Colorful produce! Top picks include:

- Carrots
- Sweet potato
- Spinach

## 4. Magnesium protects your bones and your immune system

Magnesium contributes to bone strength, promotes immunity and normalizes muscle, nerve, and heart function.

### Daily needs:

- Men ages 19–30: 400 milligrams
- 31 and older: 420 milligrams
- Women ages 19–30: 310 milligrams
- 31 and older: 320 milligrams

### Three healthy sources:

- Snack on pumpkin seeds
- Sprinkle slivered almonds on cereal or low-fat yogurt
- Substitute legumes (like beans) for meat

## 5. Vitamin C for a healthy immune system

Vitamin C is a powerful antioxidant and is vital for the production of collagen, the connective tissue that keeps muscles, skin and bones, healthy. Your body can't store vitamin C so you need some every day.

### Daily needs:

- Men ages 19 and older
- 90 milligrams
- Women ages 19 and older
- 75 milligrams

### Three healthy sources contain over 50 milligrams per serving:

- Orange juice, 6 ounces
- Strawberries, 1/2 cup raw
- Broccoli, cooked, 1/2 cup

## 6. Potassium for nerves and muscles

Potassium is important for healthy muscles, nerves and fluid balance, as well as promoting strong bones. It also fights high blood pressure, which can creep up with age. People over age 19 need 4,700 milligrams of potassium every day.

### Three healthy sources contain over 500 milligrams per serving:

- 1 cup canned white beans
- 1 cup cooked spinach
- 1 cup low-fat yogurt

Source: WebMD®

