



VITAMIN B12

What Does Vitamin B12 Do?

Vitamin B12 works with folate (another vitamin) to help your body make new cells, including blood cells and nerve cells.

What Is Vitamin B12 Deficiency?

Vitamin B12 deficiency means your body's level of vitamin B12 is low. Symptoms of vitamin B12 deficiency may include:

- ▶ weakness or poor balance
- ▶ constipation
- ▶ loss of appetite
- ▶ anemia
- ▶ numbness and tingling in the hands and feet
- ▶ depression, confusion, poor memory, or dementia

Many things can cause these symptoms. Only your doctor can diagnose a vitamin B12 deficiency. If it is diagnosed, you may need to take a vitamin B12 supplement.

Who Is at Risk of Vitamin B12 Deficiency?

Some people are at risk because their bodies cannot absorb enough vitamin B12 from foods:

- ▶ If you have low levels of stomach acid, you may not absorb enough vitamin B12.
- ▶ Other digestive problems may also keep your body from absorbing this vitamin.
- ▶ The body's ability to absorb vitamin B12 decreases as you age.
- ▶ Some medicines might block vitamin B12 absorption, such as certain types of antacids and some oral diabetes medications.

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HOW MUCH VITAMIN B12 DO YOU NEED?

Here are guidelines for how much vitamin B12 most healthy teens and adults need each day:

- ▶ Teens (14-years-old and older) and adults: 2.4 micrograms (mcg)
 - ▶ Pregnant teens and women: 2.6 mcg
 - ▶ Breastfeeding teens and women: 2.8 mcg
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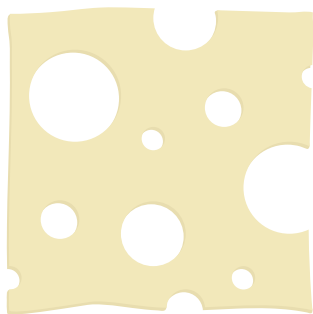
People who do not eat enough foods with vitamin B12 may also be at risk. Vitamin B12 is found naturally only in animal foods (meat, fish, and dairy). People who do not eat animal foods can get vitamin B12 from foods fortified with this vitamin, such as fortified rice or soy milk or some cereals. Talk to your health-care provider if you think you need a supplement.



Can You Get Too Much Vitamin B12?

Only a small amount of vitamin B12 is absorbed by the body, so it is uncommon for people to have levels that are too high.

Which Foods Have Vitamin B12?



Food	Amount per Serving (mcg)
Clams, cooked, 3 ounces	84.1
Liver, beef, cooked, 3 ounces	70.7
Nutritional yeasts, fortified with 100% of the daily value for vitamin B12, 1 serving	6.0
Trout, rainbow, wild, cooked, 3 ounces	5.4
Salmon, sockeye, cooked, 3 ounces	4.8
Trout, rainbow, farmed, cooked, 3 ounces	3.5
Tuna fish, light, canned in water, 3 ounces	2.5
Cheeseburger, double patty and bun, 1 sandwich	2.1
Haddock, cooked, 3 ounces	1.8
Breakfast cereals, fortified with 25% of the daily value for vitamin B12, 1 serving	1.5
Beef, top sirloin, broiled, 3 ounces	1.4
Milk, low-fat (1%), 1 cup	1.2
Yogurt, fruit, low-fat, 8 ounces	1.1
Beef taco, 1 soft taco	0.9
Cheese, Swiss, 1 ounce	0.9
Egg, whole, hard boiled, 1 large	0.6
Ham, cured, roasted, 3 ounces	0.6
Chicken, breast meat, roasted, 3 ounces	0.3

Source: US Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service. FoodData Central, 2019.