

**Key Nutrients for Women. All you need to know about Vitamins.** -The Ultimate Nutrition Guide for Women. **by Leslie Beck**



**B Vitamins**

Without B vitamins our bodies would lack energy. These eight nutrients are indispensable for yielding energy compounds from the foods we eat. Many B vitamins serve as helpers to enzymes that release energy from fat, protein and carbohydrate.

## **Vitamin B12**

Vitamin B12 and folate work very closely together in the body. Without enough B12, your body is unable to use folate. Without any help from folate, vitamin B12 maintains the protective covering of nerve fibers. Your bones also rely on this B vitamin for normal metabolism.

This vitamin is found exclusively in animal foods. (Some soy and rice beverages are fortified with B12.) If you eat meat, poultry and dairy products on regular basis, you're probably not at risk for a B12 deficiency.

## **Vitamin B6**

The body uses B6 to form an important enzyme that's needed to create serotonin, a chemical in brain that has a calming and relaxing effect. Healthy women need 1.3 to 1.5 milligrams of the vitamin each day.

**Vitamin B6****Food  
(milligrams)**

Beef, flank, cooked, 3oz (90g)  
0,3mg

Pork center loin, cooked, 3oz (90g)  
0,3mg

Chicken breast, cooked, half (140g)  
0,3mg

Chicken leg, cooked (180g)  
0,2mg

Salmon, sockeye, cooked, 3oz (90g)  
0,2mg

Tuna, canned and drained, 3oz (90g) 0,4mg
100% bran cereal, 1/2 cup (125ml) 0,5mg
Cereal, whole-grain flakes, 2/3 cup (160ml) 0,5mg
Avocado, Florida, half medium 0,4mg
Avocado, California, half medium 0,2mg

## **Vitamin E**

This vitamin is a powerful antioxidant. Once consumed, vitamin E makes its way to the liver where it is incorporated into cell membranes and lipoproteins that transport cholesterol. It is here that vitamin E works to protect these compounds from oxygen damage caused by free

radicals, possibly reducing the risk of heart disease. This powerhouse nutrient has been touted to ward off certain cancers, cataracts and Alzheimer's disease, and boost the immune system.

### **Vitamin D**

Along with calcium, this vitamin plays a key role in preventing osteoporosis. Our skin is able to make plenty of vitamin D if it's exposed to sunlight. But if you live in area where you see little sunshine for much of the year, dietary sources of this vitamin become extremely important.

Elderly women who don't get outside often need to pay extra attention to their vitamin D intake. As we get older, our skin becomes less efficient at producing the vitamin from sunlight.