

# Quick Nutrition Check for Vitamin B12

Your body needs **vitamin B12** to help keep your nerve and red blood cells healthy and to make DNA, the genetic material in your cells. If you don't get enough vitamin B12 you might develop anemia and feel tired and weak.

Vitamin B12 is naturally found only in animal foods such as meat, fish, seafood, poultry, eggs, milk, yogurt and cheese. It is also added to some foods and beverages like fortified plant based beverages, meat substitutes and nutritional yeast.

This fact sheet provides information on how much vitamin B12 you need and how to check if you get enough vitamin B12 in your diet.



## Steps you can take

### 1. Find out how much vitamin B12 you need

Age	Recommended daily amount of vitamin B12 (micrograms or mcg)	Stay below
1 - 3 years	0.9	An upper limit for vitamin B12 has not been established
4 - 8 years	1.2	
9 - 13 years	1.8	
14 - 70+ years	2.4	
Pregnant	2.6	
Breastfeeding	2.8	

**Adults older than 50 years:** Older adults do not absorb naturally occurring vitamin B12 very well. Adults over 50 should get the recommended amount of vitamin B12 from fortified foods or a supplement.

**Vegetarians:** Vegetarian diets, in particular vegan diets, need to be planned carefully to meet vitamin B12 needs. If you follow a vegan diet and avoid all animal foods including eggs, milk, yogurt and cheese, you'll need to get vitamin B12 from fortified foods and/or a supplement.

## 2. Find out how much vitamin B12 you eat

To estimate the amount of vitamin B12 in your diet, keep a food record for one or two days. Record what and how much you eat and drink. Add up the vitamin B12 in your diet using the amounts in foods listed below.

<i>Food</i>	<i>Portion</i>	<i>Vitamin B12 (mcg)</i>
Meat, fish, seafood, poultry and eggs		
Liver, beef, cooked	75 g (2½ oz)	62.4
Mussels, cooked	75 g (2½ oz)	18.0
Mackerel, cooked	75 g (2½ oz)	14.3
Clams, canned	75 g (2½ oz)	14.0
Sardines, canned in oil, drained	75 g (2½ oz)	6.7
Trout, cooked	75 g (2½ oz)	5.6
Salmon, Pink, canned with bone	75 g (2½ oz)	3.7
Beef, regular ground, pan-fried	75 g (2½ oz)	2.7
Beef, hip, rump roast, cooked	75 g (2½ oz)	2.3
Tuna, light, canned in water, drained	75 g (2½ oz)	2.2

Salmon, Atlantic farmed, cooked	75 g (2½ oz)	2.1
Egg, hard boiled	2 large	1.6
Pork, loin, rib roast, roasted	75 g (2½ oz)	0.8
Ham, honey, smoked, cooked	75 g (2½ oz)	0.3
Chicken, breast, no skin, roasted	75 g (2½ oz)	0.3
Chicken, whole leg, no skin, roasted	75 g (2½ oz)	0.3
Fortified Soy foods**		
Meatless deli slices	75g (2 ½ oz)	3.0
Meatless wiener	1 wiener (70 g)	1.6
Veggie burger, soy	1 patty (70 g)	1.4
Soy beverage, fortified	250 mL (1 cup)	1.0
Milk, yogurt and cheese		
Milk, (skim, 1%, 2%)	250 mL (1 cup)	1.3
Cheese, cottage, 2%	250 mL (1 cup)	1.1
Buttermilk, 2%	250 mL (1 cup)	1.0
Cheese, (edam, gouda)	175 mL (¾ cup)	0.8
Greek yogurt, 2%	175 mL (¾ cup)	0.6
Yogurt (fruit and plain)	175 mL (¾ cup)	0.5
Cheese (cheddar, mozzarella)	50 g (1½ oz)	0.4
Other**		
Nutritional yeast, fortified, large flake	16g, 30 mL (2 heaping tbsp.)	8.0

Almond or rice beverage, fortified	250 mL (1 cup)	1.0
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Source: Canadian Nutrient File, Accessed November 2019

\*\*Check the nutrition facts table for amounts of vitamin B12 in fortified food products.



### Additional Resources

For information and advice based on your specific food and nutrition needs and preferences, call **8-1-1** and ask to speak to a HealthLink BC dietitian.

For additional information, see the following resources:

HealthLink BC [www.healthlinkbc.ca](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca) – Get medically approved non-emergency health information.

Dietitian Services Fact Sheets - Available by mail (call **8-1-1**) or visit [www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthy-eating](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthy-eating)

Canadian Nutrient File - <https://food-nutrition.canada.ca/cnf-fce/index-eng.jsp>

*These resources are provided as sources of additional information believed to be reliable and accurate at the time of publication and should not be considered an endorsement of any information, service, product or company.*



### Notes

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