



Good Sources of Nutrients Vitamin B12

Vitamin B12 at work

- Helps maintain healthy nerve cells
- Helps folate make red blood cells
- Helps produce DNA, the genetic material in all cells

Vitamin B12 for your health

- May help prevent anemia

Where is vitamin B12 found?

Vitamin B12 is found naturally in foods that come from animals, such as fish, meat and milk. Fortified foods are an important source of vitamin B12 for vegetarians. Here are some examples of vitamin B-12 rich foods from the different food groups in MyPyramid:

Milk group:

- Milk
- Cheese
- Yogurt

Meat and bean group:

- Fish
- Beef
- Pork
- Eggs
- Poultry

Buenas fuentes de nutrientes Vitamina B12

La función de la vitamina B12

- Ayuda a mantener células nerviosas sanas
- Ayuda al folato a formar glóbulos rojos en la sangre
- Ayuda a producir ADN, el material genético en todas células

La vitamina B12 para su salud

- Puede ayudar a prevenir la anemia

¿Dónde se encuentra la vitamina B12?

La vitamina B12 ocurre naturalmente en alimentos de fuente animal, tal como el pescado, la carne y el queso. Alimentos fortalecidos son una fuente importante de vitamina B12 para los vegetarianos. Los siguientes son ejemplos de alimentos ricos en vitamina B12 de los distintos grupos alimenticios de MiPirámide.

Productos lácteos:

- Leche
- Queso
- Yogur

Grupo de carne y frijoles:

- Pescado
- Carne de res
- Carne de cerdo

Fortified foods:

- Fortified ready-to-eat cereals
- Fortified soy-based beverages
- Veggie burgers

A day's supply of vitamin B12 can be obtained by eating:

- 3 ounces of chicken breast plus 1 hard-boiled egg plus 1 cup plain low-fat yogurt

OR

- 1 cup soy milk plus 1 cup raisin bran cereal

Who should worry about getting enough B12?

- **Infants of vegetarian mothers:** Breast-fed infants of strict vegetarian mothers may develop vitamin B12 deficiency because these children have small amounts of this nutrient stored in their bodies. A vitamin B12 deficiency in infants is difficult to detect, but if left untreated, it can result in permanent damage to their sensory and motor skills. To avoid this risk, mothers who follow a strict vegetarian diet should consult with a pediatrician about the appropriate use of vitamin B12 supplements for their infants and children.
- **Children, teens and adults who are strict vegetarians:** Strict vegetarians who do not eat or drink any animal products are at risk of B12 deficiency, so they must rely on B12-fortified foods such as breakfast cereals, soy-based beverages and veggie burgers.
- **Older adults:** As we age, our ability to use B12 from animal food may weaken. That is why many older adults must rely on B12 fortified foods or supplements.
- **People with certain medical conditions of the stomach and intestines:** Certain medical conditions of the stomach and intestine can prevent the body from using B12 from

- Huevos
- Aves de corral

Alimentos fortalecidos:

- Cereales preparados para desayuno fortalecidos
- Bebidas a base de soja fortalecidas
- Carne vegetal

1 ración diaria de vitamina B12 se puede obtener al consumir:

- 3 onzas de pechuga de pollo y 1 huevo hervido y una taza de yogur simple de grasa reducida
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- 1 taza de leche de soja y 1 taza de cereal de salvado con uvas pasas

¿Quién necesita preocuparse por obtener suficiente vitamina B12?

- **Recién nacidos de madres vegetarianas:** Bebés, cuyas madres son vegetarianas y alimentan al recién nacido con leche materna, pueden desarrollar deficiencia de vitamina B12. Es difícil detectar una deficiencia de vitamina B12 en bebés, pero si no se trata puede resultar en daño permanente a sus habilidades motoras y sensoriales. Para evitar este riesgo, madres que siguen una dieta vegetariana deben consultar a un pediatra acerca del uso debido de suplementos de vitamina b12 para sus bebés e hijos.
- **Niños, adolescentes y adultos que son vegetarianos:** Los vegetarianos que no comen ni beben productos animales corren el riesgo de deficiencia de vitamina B12, por lo tanto necesitan consumir alimentos fortalecidos con vitamina B12 como son el cereal preparado para desayuno, bebidas a base de soja o carne vegetal.
- **Adultos mayores:** A medida que envejecemos, disminuye nuestra habilidad

animal-based foods. Individuals with these conditions will also need to rely on B12-fortified foods or supplements.

Remember, ask a physician, registered dietitian or pharmacist whether you should take a dietary supplement such as a multivitamin pill.

Sources

1. U.S. Department of Agriculture. MyPyramid. www.MyPyramid.gov
2. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005. www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines
3. National Institutes of Health. Office of Dietary Supplements. <http://dietary-supplements.info.nih.gov/factsheets/vitaminb12.asp>
4. Institute of Medicine. Dietary Reference Intakes for Vitamin B12. National Academy Press. Washington, DC. 1998.

para absorber la vitamina B12 de alimentos de fuente animal. Es por esta razón que muchos adultos mayores recurren a alimentos fortalecidos o a suplementos de vitamina B12.

- **Personas con ciertas condiciones médicas del estómago o de los intestinos:** Ciertas condiciones médicas del estómago o de los intestinos pueden impedir que el cuerpo use la vitamina B12 proveniente de alimentos de fuente animal. Individuos con estas condiciones también necesitarán recurrir a alimentos fortalecidos o a suplementos de vitamina B12.

Consulte a su médico, dietista licenciado o farmacéutico para averiguar si necesita tomar un suplemento dietético tal como multivitamínicos.

Fuentes

1. U.S. Department of Agriculture. MyPyramid. www.MyPyramid.gov
2. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005. www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines
3. National Institutes of Health. Office of Dietary Supplements. <http://dietary-supplements.info.nih.gov/factsheets/vitaminb12.asp>
4. Institute of Medicine. Dietary Reference Intakes for Vitamin B12. National Academy Press. Washington, DC. 1998.



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