

VITAMIN A



Vitamin A is fat soluble vitamin, which means it is stored in the fat tissues of the body for a few days to up to six months. If you get too much of a fat-soluble vitamin, it can be stored in your liver and may sometimes cause health problems.

Vitamin A is generally found as Beta-Carotene and Retinol and converted to Vitamin A in the body.

Vitamin A is a group of compounds that play an important role in our health as: aids in treatment of some eye disorders, including prevention of night blindness and formation of visual purple in the eye, promotes bone growth, teeth development, reproduction, cell division, shortens duration of disease (colds) and inflammation between bones and muscles, helps form and maintain healthy skin, hair, mucous membranes for treatment of acne and other skin eruptions, May help treat acne, impetigo, boils, carbuncles and open ulcers when applied externally, helps hair, teeth and gums, mucus membranes.

Vitamin A helps regulate the immune system, which helps prevent or fight off infections by making white blood cells that destroy harmful bacteria and viruses.

Vitamin A promotes healthy surface linings of the eyes and the respiratory, urinary and intestinal tract.

In general, there are two categories of vitamin A, depending on whether the food source is an animal or a plant.

Vitamin A found in foods that come from animals is called preformed vitamin A. It is absorbed in the form of **retinol**, one of the most active forms of vitamin A.

A food sources include: liver, whole milk, egg yolk, cheese, butter and some fortified food products.

Vitamin A, also called retinol, helps your eyes adjust to light changes when you come in from outside and also helps keep your eyes, skin and mucous membranes moist.

Vitamin A that is found in colorful fruits and vegetables is called provitamin A **carotenoid**. They can be made into retinol in the body. A carotenoids found in foods that come from plants are beta-carotene alpha-carotene and beta-cryptoxanthin. Among these, beta-carotene is most efficiently made into retinol.

A food sources include: from oranges and green fruit and vegetables- carrots, spinach, apricots, mango, rock melon, broccoli, pumpkin, pawpaw, watermelon, sweet potatoes, papaya.

Early information from scientific studies suggests that beta-carotene might help people who already have Coronary Artery Disease (CAD).

Vitamin A deficiency usually results from malnutrition, but can also be due to abnormalities in intestinal absorption of retinol or carotenoids. Deficiency is prevalent in humans, especially children, in certain underdeveloped countries.

Signs of possible vitamin A deficiency: sinusitis and sore throat, colds, lung infection, night blindness, granules on eyelids, dry and rough skin – “goose flesh” appearance, abnormal bone growth.

Today scientist research vitamin A and beta carotene for cancer prevention and treatment as well as a powerful immune stimulator.

Vitamin A Toxicity - Vitamin A is one of the vitamins in which over supplementation can have negative effects. Over supplementation or toxicity is possible if mega-doses are given for long periods of time (months to years).

These toxicities only occur with preformed (retinoid) vitamin A (such as from liver). The carotenoid forms (such as beta-carotene as found in carrots), give no such symptoms, but excessive dietary intake of beta-carotene can causes orange-yellow discoloration of the skin.

The signs of possible vitamin A toxicity: unexplained headaches, dry itchy skin, hair loss, bone pain, blurred vision.

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