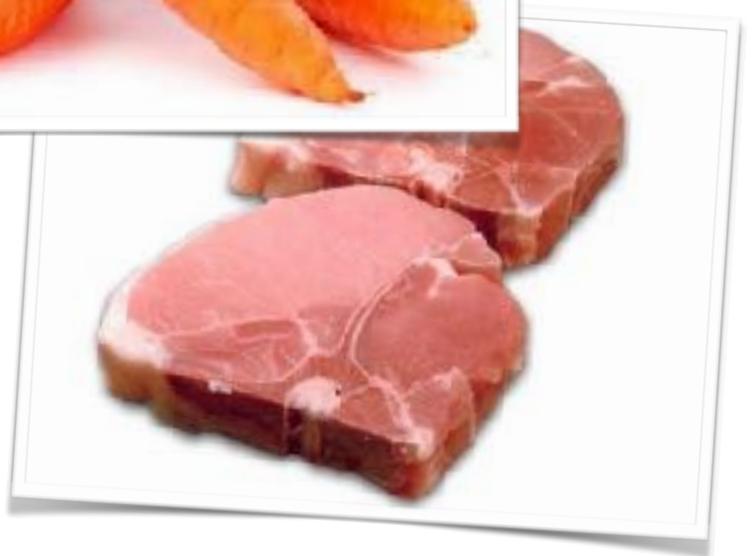


Vitamins

Why micronutrients are important



Vitamins

Why micronutrients are important

We have looked at Carbohydrates, Fats and Proteins whilst reviewing your breakfast, lunch, dinner and snack options. These nutrients are referred to as **Macronutrients**. We must not forget fibre or water, two other nutrients.

This handout looks at **Micronutrients**. Nutrients six and seven commonly known as Vitamins and Minerals.

We will look at Vitamin A, B (many) and C to start off with.

A bit of background on Vitamins

Vitamins are natural. We find them in many of nature's foods. That's a good thing as they are essential when it comes to our health and our existence.

- Vitamins play a big part in how our body functions, namely the function of our metabolism
- Vitamins exist in animal and plant food we consume
- Vitamins are required for normal growth and development
- Vitamins help release the energy from the Carbohydrate we eat
- Vitamins are involved in building, repairing and maintaining healthy tissue
- Vitamins protect our body cells from damage and disease

There is a lot of information about vitamins that this handout cannot possibly sum-up in four pages. However, the purpose of this handout is to talk about three particular vitamins and why we need to consume them.

We will do this in alphabetical order, starting with Vitamin A.

Vitamin A

A fat-soluble vitamin. Unlike water soluble vitamins, the other type of vitamins we will take a look at, these types of vitamins can be stored within the body fat stores.

- ▶ Vitamin A is essential for vision in dim light.



They can be found in milk, cheese, egg, carrot, tomato and cabbage.

Some more options here for the vegetables you eat at dinner time and possibly the soups you eat at lunchtime.

Vitamin B1 (Thiamin)

There are a whole host of B vitamins. These vitamins are water-soluble which means our body cannot store any unwanted vitamins, unlike fat-soluble vitamins and any excess is removed by the body via our urine.

Therefore, we need to eat plenty of these vitamins!

We will just look at Vitamin B1 (Thiamin) today. This vitamin helps release the energy from carbohydrate. It is particularly important for the brain and nerves that utilise glucose. Carbohydrate becomes glucose when broken down.



- ▶ To avoid, muscle weakness and headaches, cereals, nuts, pork and fruit are the perfect vitamin B1 food sources.

Pork chops for dinner? Ensure you cut the fat off and grill too.

Vitamin C

- ▶ A deficiency in Vitamin C can lead to weak bones and scurvy (bleeding gums/spots).

Vitamin C is involved in the production of collagen, a protein used in the structure of connective tissue and bone. It aids wound healing and iron absorption.

It is vital you keep all Vitamin C based foods away from light, heat and air as it is easily destructible. Vitamin C sources are as follows.



Stick to citrus fruits and green vegetables. Strawberries are a great source of Vitamin C too. Steam your vegetables don't boil them. Stir-fry them too.

Further food ideas from these three vitamins

- ▶ Mashed your carrots - Vitamin A
- ▶ Lean pork chops - Vitamin B (Thiamin)
- ▶ A grapefruit for breakfast - Vitamin C