



## Vitamin B12

Vitamin B12 helps maintain healthy nerve cells and red blood cells. It is also needed to make genetic material in all cells. Vitamin B12 is also called cobalamin because it contains the metal cobalt.

Vitamin B12 is bound to protein in food. Hydrochloric acid in the stomach releases B12 from food during digestion, where it then combines with a substance called intrinsic factor and can be absorbed in the small bowel.

Signs and symptoms of B12 deficiency include: anemia, fatigue, weakness, constipation, loss of appetite, weight loss, depression, confusion, poor memory, and numbness and tingling in the hands and feet.

Because B12 is mainly found in animal products, strict vegetarians are particularly at risk for vitamin B12 deficiency and may require supplementation or an increased intake of foods that are fortified with B12.

B12 is found naturally in foods that come from animals, including fish, meat, poultry, eggs, milk and other dairy products. Fortified breakfast cereals are also a good source of B12. Below is a table summarizing some common food sources of vitamin B12.

Food	Portion	Micrograms (mcg)
Clams, cooked	3 ounces	84.1
Beef liver, braised	1 slice	47.9
Fortified breakfast cereals	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup	6
Wild rainbow trout, cooked	3 ounces	5.4
Sockeye salmon	3 ounces	4.9
Farmed rainbow trout	3 ounces	4.2
Top sirloin, broiled	3 ounces	2.4
Yogurt, plain, low-fat	1 cup	1.4
Haddock, cooked	3 ounces	1.2
Tuna, canned in water	3 ounces	1
Milk	1 cup	.9
Ham, roasted	3 ounces	.6
Eggs, hard-boiled	1 whole	.6
American cheese	1 ounce	.3
Chicken, roasted	$\frac{1}{2}$ breast	.3

## **Recommended Intakes (RDA) for Vitamin B12**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Amount per Day</b>
Males	2.4 mcg
Females	2.4 mcg
Pregnancy	2.6 mcg
Lactation	2.8 mcg

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