

## GET TO KNOW YOUR VITAMINS

If you eat a healthy diet, do you need to take vitamins? Not so long ago, the answer from most experts would have been an emphatic "no". But quite a bit has changed; for instance, the nutrient supply in our soil continues to drop. Data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture has reported a decrease of up to 38% in protein, calcium, vitamin C, phosphorus, iron, and riboflavin as compared to produce from last year. Acid rain, shallow tilling and an agricultural push for higher yield per acre has a direct affect on the nutritional value of fresh fruits and vegetables. Not to mention, some produce is rushed to market to meet consumer demand well before it has reached full maturity.

The bottom line is that the nutritional value of fruits and vegetables isn't what it used to be. Knowledge of these nutritional deficiencies extends well past the agricultural industry. In fact the Journal of the American Medical Association recommends that each adult consume at least one daily multi-nutrient supplement. Ideally, your daily supplement should meet (or exceed) the recommended daily allowances (RDA) of several vitamins as many work together to provide your health benefits.

**Here are some of the most important vitamins and the benefits of each:**

### VITAMIN A

- Prevents night blindness and other eye problems.
- Improves the body's resistance to infection by maintaining the health of skin and mucous membranes.
- Stimulates the production of white blood cells.
- Helps maintain the health of endothelial cells (those lining the body's interior surface).
- Regulate cell growth and division.

### VITAMIN B1 (Thiamin)

- Helps fuel the body by converting blood sugar into energy.
- Keeps mucous membranes healthy.
- Essential for the proper functioning of the nervous, cardiovascular and muscular systems.
- Promotes normal tone of the intestines, stomach and heart.

### VITAMIN B2 (Riboflavin)

- Works with other B vitamins to process carbs, proteins and fats.
- Promotes the growth and production of red blood cells.
- Supports healthy skin and vision.
- Alleviates eye fatigue and is important in the prevention and treatment of cataracts.

### VITAMIN B3 (Niacin)

- Aids in carbohydrate, protein and fat metabolism.

- Maintains normal functioning of the nervous system and digestive tract.
- May lower blood cholesterol.
- Promotes healthy appetite, skin and nerves.

#### **VITAMIN B5 (Pantothenic Acid)**

- Plays an important role in the production of adrenal hormones.
- Is required for the formation of antibodies.
- Assist in metabolism of carbohydrates, proteins and fats.
- Produces neurotransmitters that are required for proper nerve and muscle formation.

#### **VITAMIN B6**

- Maintains potassium and sodium balance needed for a properly function nervous system.
- Needed for proper absorption of B12.
- Inhibits the formation of homocysteine which attacks the heart muscle and allows the deposition of cholesterol around the heart muscle.

#### **(Biotin) VITAMIN B8**

- A major component in the natural hair growth process—helping produce health hair and prevent graying and balding.
- It plays a major role in the overall health of skin and nails.
- May also improve sugar control by improving blood sugar utilization.

#### **(Folic Acid) VITAMIN B9**

- Helps cells divide.
- Forms hemoglobin (which carries oxygen in red blood cells).
- Helps keep homocysteine levels low—providing protection against heart disease and stroke.

#### **VITAMIN B12**

- Works with B9 (folic acid) to produce healthy red blood cells.
- Promotes a healthy nervous system.
- Promotes normal growth and development.
- Important for healthy bone marrow.

#### **VITAMIN C**

- Powerful antioxidant that protects against pollution.
- Plays a role in controlling infections.
- It prevents oxygen and free radicals from damaging tissues.
- Helps makes collagen (a tissue needed for healthy bones, teeth, gums and blood vessels).
- Helps the body absorb iron.

- Helps lower blood pressure and blood cholesterol.

### **VITAMIN D3**

- Helps ensure that your body absorbs and retains calcium and phosphorous, both critical for building bones.
- Laboratory studies have also shown that vitamin D keeps cancer cells from growing and dividing.
- Vitamin D deficiency has been associated with an increased risk for fractures.
- Essential for normal growth and development.

### **VITAMIN E**

- When taken daily, it appears to slow the aging process.
- It has strong antioxidant properties—protecting tissues from oxygen damage.
- Has been shown to reduce your chance of a heart attack by 75%.
- Improves circulation and aids in normal clotting and healing.

**These vitamins are all provided in RDA levels or higher in Waiora's Essential Daily Nutrients.**