

THE ROLE OF VITAMINS IN OUR LIFE

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ABSTRACT

The importance of vitamins for our health can hardly be overestimated. Probably, everyone has heard that vitamins and minerals are part and parcel of a healthy diet. Unfortunately, statistics says that today people all over the world consume too much calories and too little essential nutrients and vitamins. Lack of vitamins, known as vitamin deficiency, influences the state of our skin, hair, nails, teeth and bones. In more serious cases it can cause heavy diseases – spasms, loss of hair and teeth, loss of vision, hepatic disorders, skin diseases, and many others.

Vitamins are a natural living compounds required in the diet humans eat for normal growth and maintenance of life. Vitamins function as “cofactors” in metabolisms of products in the body. Vitamins can’t replace food. Vitamins must be supplied in the diet or in the dietary supplement. That’s why doctors suggest taking vitamins with a meal. A well-balanced diet including plenty amounts of fruit and vegetables plus eggs, meat, and fish. Vitamins help regulate metabolisms. They also help convert fats and carbohydrates into energy and assist in building bones and tissue. Most foods we eat contain vitamins. For those who don’t eat certain food that contains the vitamins they need, can buy vitamins in pill and capsule form. Vitamins differ widely in chemical structure. Therefore, there is no common chemical grouping. Vitamins are classified alphabetically. Fat-soluble vitamins are stored in body fat, where they may be combined in amounts that can become toxic. Examples of fat

soluble vitamins are vitamins A, D, E, and K. Vitamin A, also called retinol, helps with growth, vision, having healthy tissue, skin, and hair, and helps resistance to getting infections. You can get sources of Vitamin A by involving milk, butter, eggs, liver, and leafy green and yellow vegetables to your everyday diet. Symptoms when you don't get enough of this vitamin consist of night blindness, itching, dry skin, and the loss of sense of taste. Vitamin D functions with bones, teeth, good calcium, and phosphorus metabolism. You can get sources of vitamin D by eating milk, cod liver-oil, tuna, salmon oil, and eggs. You can also get this vitamin from exposure to sunlight. It is important in pregnancy and for newborn infants. Symptoms when you don't get enough of this vitamin consist of soft bones and teeth, spontaneous fractures, and bone curvature. Vitamin E helps with protecting cell membrane and tissue, maintains circulatory system, and Antioxidant. You can get Vitamin E through vegetable oil, grains, wheat germ, and lettuce. Symptoms when you don't get enough of this vitamin, consist of poor muscular and circulatory performance.

All in all, there are over thirty vitamins, and some of them are incorporated into groups. Vitamins themselves don't have any nutritional value, in other words, they don't contain any calories and can't serve as sources of energy. They relate to micronutrients that are contained in food. So, to be healthy, we need to eat several types of food: fruit and vegetables, fish and meat, and milk products. Vitamins can be divided into two large groups: fat-soluble and water soluble ones. As the term suggests, water soluble vitamins are dissolved in water, while the fat-soluble ones are dissolved only in fats. The first group includes vitamin C and B-group vitamins. Such vitamins as A, E, D and K belong to the second group, and they can be stored in our organism. That's why we lack vitamins of the first group more often.

The most essential vitamins for children are D, C and A. For example, vitamin D is responsible for the healthy development of bone tissues and teeth, as well as for calcium absorption. Its deficiency often causes rickets, which is especially dangerous for girls. People get it with sunshine, but if you live in the northern regions, where sunny days occur not very often, you should take enough D vitamins with food. It is

contained, for example, in egg yolk, butter, cod liver oil. Babies get all vitamins with breast milk, so, breastfeeding women should eat these products. Vitamin A is responsible for the growth and good vision. It's contained in beef liver. Greenery, carrots, tomatoes, and some other vegetables contain a lot of carotene, which if taken inside with any fat, is converted into vitamin A. As for vitamin C, it's very important for the immune system. It can be found almost in all fresh fruit and vegetables, especially in kiwi, black currant, briar, and sweet pepper. Vitamin B9, which is also known as folic acid is a very important element for women. It is absolutely indispensable during pregnancy and breastfeeding. Also it regulates nervous system activity and helps to combat depression. It is contained in green vegetables, liver, wholemeal bread, honey. Vitamin E is one more “female” vitamin. It is a natural antioxidant, which inhibits the process of senescence, regulates the reproductive system activity and has a good effect on the state of skin, hair and nails. Sometimes it is even described as the “vitamin of beauty”. It can be found in crude vegetables oils, nuts, and wheat germ.

So, if you wish to be healthy, energetic and have a healthy appearance, pay careful attention to your diet. Try to choose natural food containing all basic vitamins and minerals. Your daily ration must include enough fresh fruit and vegetables, crude oil and wholegrain bread. Also try to eat fish or sea products at least twice a week.

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