

VITAMIN B₁₂

DO YOU NEED MORE?



WHY DO WE NEED VITAMIN B₁₂

Vitamin B₁₂ is important to every cell in the body because it contributes to our genetic material, DNA. It also works with other B vitamins, namely folate and vitamin B₁₂ to help cells divide and multiply. More specifically, it ensures we have healthy blood and a well-functioning nervous system.

WHO NEEDS MORE?

- pregnant and breastfeeding women
- older people
- vegetarians, particularly vegans
- those with disorders of the stomach or small intestine, eg. coeliac disease, Crohn's disease, atrophic gastritis or who have had surgery
- people on certain long-term medications which reduce the amount of vitamin B₁₂ used from food. Your doctor or nurse will advise if you are taking one of these.

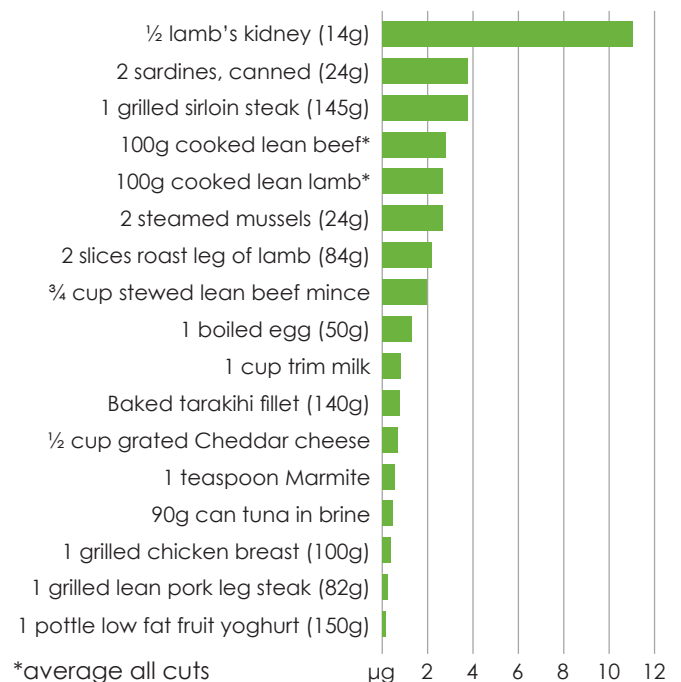
People short of vitamin B₁₂ may not have any symptoms, so those listed above should have their blood levels checked by their doctor or nurse.

If we don't have enough vitamin B₁₂ in our blood we can:

- feel tired
- look pale
- have little appetite
- lose weight
- can experience, over a longer period of time, tingling in the hands and feet, sore tongue and possibly memory loss, confusion and depression.

WHERE IS IT FOUND?

Vitamin B₁₂ is found in meat, fish, eggs, milk and dairy products. There isn't any vitamin B₁₂ in fruit and vegetables. Some soy products and a few yeast extracts have vitamin B₁₂ added - check the ingredients list to ensure vitamin B₁₂ is included.



HOW MUCH DO WE NEED?

These are the amounts of vitamin B₁₂ recommended by the Ministry of Health.

	µg VITAMIN B ₁₂ PER DAY
0 - 6 months	0.4
7 - 12 months	0.5
1 - 3 years	0.9
4 - 8 years	1.2
9 - 13 years	1.8
14+ years	2.4
Pregnancy	2.6
Breastfeeding	2.8

We don't need much vitamin B₁₂ each day, but what we do need is essential. Here are some examples of everyday meals which provide vitamin B₁₂

EVERYDAY MEALS PROVIDING VITAMIN B₁₂

BREAKFAST

µg VITAMIN B₁₂

- bowl of cereal(45g) with 1 cup trim milk 1.0
- 2 slices toast with Marmite and a boiled egg 1.7

LUNCH

- filled roll with lean beef and salad 2.2
- sardines on toast 3.4
- pita filled with lean lamb, lettuce, tomato and avocado 2.4
- jacket potato filled with chilli con carne, topped with cheese and served with salad 2.7

DINNER

- Steak and kidney casserole with rice and vegetables 14.9
- Lean lamb leg steak stir-fry with vegetables and noodles 3.2
- Pizza topped with tinned tuna and cheese 1.3
- Grilled sirloin steak with wedges and salad 3.4

Tip: Desserts, including dairy products, such as fresh fruit and yoghurt or fruit crumble and custard, will add extra vitamin B₁₂.

SNACKS

- 1 slice of bread and Marmite 1.7
- liver paté on 2 crackers 1.0
- Fruit smoothie with and yoghurt 0.9
- A pottle of yoghurt 0.4

VEGETARIANS/VEGANS

Dairy products, eggs and/or foods with added vitamin B₁₂ should be eaten every day. Foods with added vitamin B₁₂ include some fortified soy products and a few yeast extracts. Strict vegetarians or vegans, should take a vitamin B₁₂ supplement. This is particularly important when breastfeeding, to ensure adequate infant stores. Spirulina and other seaweed products are not considered suitable sources of vitamin B₁₂.

RECIPE RICH IN VITAMIN B₁₂ FAMILY LAMB STIR FRY

400g Quality Mark lamb rump

Vegetables

2 cloves garlic, crushed

2 carrots, peeled and thinly sliced

250g broccoli, cut into small florets, stalks lightly peeled and cut into short lengths

1 cup green peas

2 spring onions, trimmed and finely chopped

½ cup beef or chicken stock

2 tablespoons Chinese light soy sauce

To serve

Cooked noodles or rice

Lamb: Cut lamb into strips (about 3cm x 1cm).

Heat a wok over a high heat. Add half of the lamb strips and stir-fry for 1-2 minutes until browned, then transfer to a plate. Add remaining lamb strips and repeat.

Vegetables: Add another dash of oil to the wok and add the garlic, carrots and broccoli and stir-fry for 2 minutes. Add the peas and spring onion and stir-fry for a further minute. Add the lamb strips and pour in the stock and soy sauce. Stir-fry until all is heated through and the lamb is tender, no longer than 2 minutes.

To serve: Serve lamb stir-fry immediately with noodles or rice.

BEEF + LAMB NEW ZEALAND

For further information about nutrition, health and recipes please contact Beef + Lamb New Zealand, PO Box 33-648, Takapuna, Auckland 0740

Freephone 0800 733 466 or visit beeflambnz.co.nz recipes.co.nz or facebook.com/nzbeeflamb

Health problems may result from an inadequate diet. They may also have a medical basis unrelated to diet. The information on this sheet is only general and is not to be taken as a substitute for medical advice in relation to specific symptoms or health concerns.