

The Importance of Vitamin A

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Growing up we often heard our parents telling us to eat our fruits and vegetables. Reluctantly, many of us would comply with our parents' wishes and eat our carrots, green beans, and even spinach. However, little did we know that as we munching on those fruits and veggies, we were getting all sorts of important vitamins.

Vitamins are small, organic molecules that we need in small amounts in order to grow and remain healthy. Because we can't make vitamins in our bodies, we have to get them from food that we eat. **Vitamin A** is a fat-soluble vitamin that is naturally present in many foods like carrots, eggs, and even some meats, like salmon.

Vitamin A is important for many reasons, like healthy skin and strong bones. Not getting enough Vitamin A can lead to serious health problems.

Why is Vitamin A Important for My Health?

- It is necessary for normal vision
- Vitamin A helps with bone growth
- It promotes healthy skin
- Vitamin A protects against infections
- It provides immune support
- Vitamin A helps prevent cancer

What Leads to Deficiencies?

- Diets deficient in vegetables and fruits
- Not eating enough eggs and/or dairy
- Excess alcohol intake
- Long term illness/ infections
- Pregnancy



Deficiencies in Vitamin A Can Cause:

- Poor vision and/or blindness
- Improper bone growth
- Susceptibility to infections (digestion, respiratory, urinary)
- Dry, scaly, skin
- Growth retardation in children
- Night blindness in pregnancy

What are the Best Sources of Vitamin A?

- Green vegetables: spinach, broccoli, romaine lettuce
- Red, orange, and yellow vegetables: carrots, red pepper, sweet potatoes
- Fruits: mango, papaya, apricot, cantaloupe
- Eggs and dairy
- Certain fish: salmon, tuna
- Beef liver (in moderation)

References:

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