

# Food Sources of Vitamin B12

## Information About Vitamin B12

You need vitamin B12 to form DNA, make healthy blood cells and keep nerves working properly.

Low levels of vitamin B12 can cause pernicious anemia. Vegetarians who eat no animal products and the elderly who absorb less vitamin B12 are most at risk.

Vitamin B12 is found only in animal foods and fortified foods. People who avoid all animal products should look for meat alternatives, such as soy products fortified with vitamin B12.

Ten to thirty percent of older people may not absorb vitamin B12 well. Health Canada advises adults over 50 years to consume foods fortified with vitamin B12 or a supplement containing vitamin B12.

## How Much Vitamin B12 Should I Aim For?

<i>Age in years</i>	<i>Aim for an intake of micrograms (mcg)/day</i>	<i>Stay below</i>
Men and Women 19 and older	2.4	An upper limit for vitamin B12 has not been established.
Pregnant Women 19 and older	2.6	
Breastfeeding Women 19 and older	2.8	

## Vitamin B12 Content of Some Common Foods

The best sources of vitamin B12 include: eggs, milk, cheese, milk products, meat, fish, shellfish and poultry. Some soy and rice beverages as well as soy-based meat substitutes are fortified with vitamin B12. To see if a product contains vitamin B12 check the Nutrition Facts on the food label. The following table shows you which foods are sources of vitamin B12.

Food	Serving size	Vitamin B12 (mcg)
Vegetables and Fruit	This food group contains very little of this nutrient.	
Grain Products	This food group contains very little of this nutrient.	
Milk and Alternatives		
Milk		
3.3% homo, 2%, 1%	250 mL (1 cup)	1.2-1.4
Skim	250 mL (1 cup)	1.3
Buttermilk	250 mL (1 cup)	1.0
Chocolate milk	250 mL (1 cup)	1.0
Cheese		
Swiss/emmental	50 g (1 ½ oz)	1.7
Cottage cheese	250 mL (1 cup)	1.5
Feta, gouda, edam, gruyere, brie, cheddar, fontina, mozzarella, provolone	50 g (1 ½ oz)	0.7-0.9

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Processed cheese slices, cheddar	50 g (1 ½ oz)	0.4
Yogurt		
Plain (regular, low fat)	175 g (¾ cup)	1.0
Fruit bottom (regular, low fat)	175 g (¾ cup)	0.8-0.9
Yogurt beverage	200 mL	0.6
Milk Alternatives		
Soy beverage, fortified	250 mL (1 cup)	1.0
<b>Meat and Alternatives</b>		
Organ Meat		
Liver (lamb, veal, beef), cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	52.9-64.3
Kidney, lamb, cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	59.2
Kidney, veal, cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	27.7
Giblets, turkey, cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	24.9
Kidney, beef, cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	18.7
Liver (chicken, pork), cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	12.6-15.9
Pate (goose liver, chicken liver)	75 g (2 ½ oz)	6.1-7.1
Poultry		
Turkey, duck or chicken cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	0.2-0.3

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Beef		
Ground, cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	2.4-2.7
Various cuts, cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	1.3-2.5
Pork		
Various cuts, cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	0.8-1.1
Ground, cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	0.8-0.9
Ham, cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	0.7
Bacon, strips, cooked	3 slices (24 g)	0.3-0.4
Miscellaneous		
Caribou/reindeer, cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	5.0
Salami (beef, pork)	75 g (2 ½ oz) or 3 slices	1.1-2.1
Sausage (pepperoni, chorizo, Polish, Italian, frankfurter)	75 g (2 ½ oz)	0.9-1.5
Deli meat (pastrami, mortadella, bologna)	75 g (2 ½ oz) or 3 slices	1.1-1.3
Wiener/hot dog	1 wiener (45 g)	1.24
Fish and Seafood		
Clams, cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	74.2

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Oysters, cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	18.2 -26.3
Mussels, cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	18.0
Mackerel (King, Atlantic), cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	13.5-14.3
Herring, Atlantic, kippered	75 g (2 ½ oz)	14.0
Herring, cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	7.2-9.9
Tuna, bluefin, raw or cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	8.2-9.3
Roe, raw	75 g (2 ½ oz)	9.0
Crab, Alaska King, cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	8.6
Sardines, canned in oil or tomato sauce	75 g (2 ½ oz)	6.8
Caviar (black, red)	75 g (2 ½ oz)	6.0
Trout, cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	3.7-5.6
Salmon, red/sockeye, raw or cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	4.4
Salmon, pink/humpback, with bones, canned	75 g (2 ½ oz)	3.7
Salmon, Atlantic, wild, cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	2.3
Tuna, light, canned in water	75 g (2 ½ oz)	2.2
<b>Meat Alternatives</b>		
Meatless (chicken, fish sticks wiener/frankfurter, meatballs), cooked	75 g (2 ½ oz)	1.0-3.8
Meatless luncheon slice	75 g (2 ½ oz)	3.0

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Soy burger	75 g (2 ½ oz)	1.8
Egg, cooked	2 large	1.5-1.6
<b>Other</b>		
Almond, oat or rice beverage, fortified	250 mL (1 cup)	1.0
Red Star T6635 Yeast (Vegetarian Support Formula)	2 grams (1 tsp powder or 2 tsp flaked)	1.0

Source: "Canadian Nutrient File 2010", [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/nutrition/fiche-nutri-data/index-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/nutrition/fiche-nutri-data/index-eng.php) [Accessed March 22, 2012]



## Notes

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