

Let's Take Our Vitamins!

You have probably heard at least one parent saying, for instance, “Don't forget to take your vitamin!”, “Eat your salad - it is packed with vitamins!”, but what exactly are vitamins? Vitamins and minerals are substances that are found in foods we eat. Our body needs them to work properly, so we grow and develop just like we should. When it comes to vitamins, each one has a special role to play. For example, the vitamin D in milk helps our bones. The vitamin A in carrots helps us see at night, the vitamin C in oranges helps our body heal if we get a cut. Besides, vitamins in leafy green vegetables help our body make protein and energy.

When we eat foods that contain fat-soluble vitamins, the vitamins are stored in the fat tissues in our body and in our liver. They wait around in our body fat until our body needs them. Fat-soluble vitamins are happy to stay stored in our body for awhile - some stay for a few days, some for up to 6 months.

Then, when it is time for them to be used, special carriers in our body take them to where they are needed. The vitamins A, D, E, and K are all fat-soluble vitamins. The water-soluble vitamins are different. When we eat foods that have water-soluble vitamins, the vitamins don't get stored as much in our body. Instead, they travel through our bloodstream.

Whatever our body doesn't use comes out when you urinate. So, these kinds of vitamins need to be replaced often because they don't stick around. This crowd of vitamins includes vitamin C and the big group of B vitamins - B1, B2, B6 and B12.

Many foods contain protein, but the best sources are beef, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy products, nuts, seeds, and legumes like black beans and lentils.

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