

# Vitamins

## How much is enough?

The following is based on the USDA's recommended Daily Values (DV). Aim for these amounts every day. Remember, the foods you eat count!

**Vitamin A** 5,000IU for men and 4,000 IU for women a day

**Vitamin D** 5 micrograms a day

**Vitamin E** 33-400 IU a day\*

**Vitamin K** 80 micrograms a day\*

**Vitamin C** 200-300 mg a day

**B12** 6 micrograms a day

**B6, Thiamin, and Riboflavin**  
1.3-1.6 milligrams a day

**Calcium** about 1000 milligrams a day. 1,200 milligrams for women over 50.

**Selenium** 70-400 micrograms a day

**Zinc** 8 milligrams for women and 10 milligrams for men a day

**Iron** no more than 10mg a day

\* This may interfere with medications. Please ask your doctor or dietitian if you should not take these.



Vitamins and minerals are sometimes called nutrients or micronutrients. The cells in our body use vitamins and minerals to perform different functions such as digestion, brain activity, immunity, hormone production, and other body processes.

Nutrients are either found in food or supplements. It is important to get as many vitamins and minerals as possible by eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables, whole grains and lean protein. A daily multi-vitamin/mineral supplement is a safety net if you are unable to eat everything your body needs.

When choosing a multi-vitamin/mineral supplement, think about how it will affect your HIV/AIDS treatment.

Here are some guidelines to help you make a decision.

1. **How much is enough? How much is too much?** Some multi-vitamin/mineral supplements may contain less than 100% of the Daily Value (DV). This is usually because they can't fit everything into a small pill! Also, certain nutrients can be toxic when taken in large amounts. Consult your health care provider before you start taking a supplement.
2. **What do you need?** A regular multivitamin without iron, in addition to eating well, is usually enough. Some studies suggest HIV medications use extra nutrients for absorption and recommend taking an extra B-complex or Antioxidants supplement. Your health care provider might also recommend taking these during cold/flu season or when traveling.
3. **What are Antioxidants?** Antioxidants prevent the formation of free radicals that can damage cells. Some studies show that people with HIV/AIDS have an excess of free radicals. Antioxidants are Vitamin C, Vitamin A, Vitamin E, B6, Folate, Zinc, and Selenium.

## Foods that Pack a Nutrient Punch!

- Fortified Cereals
- Grapefruit\*
- Oranges
- Carrots, sweet potatoes, apricots.
- Strawberries
- Green Peppers
- Spinach, collard greens, and Kale
- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Low fat milk, cheeses and yogurts.
- Brazil nuts, almonds and walnuts.
- Tomatoes
- Lean meats, poultry, and fish.
- Avocadoes
- Lentils, beans, and chick peas.
- Bran Cereals
- Eggs

Variety is the SPICE of LIFE!

Eat many different foods to ensure you get what your body needs!