

Vitamin K

Vitamin K is a fat-soluble vitamin that we get from food. It is also produced by bacteria that live in our large intestine.



Vitamins are **essential nutrients** that our bodies need in small amounts. There are two types of vitamins:

Fat-soluble vitamins (vitamins A, D, E, and K) are stored in our liver and fatty tissues and are not lost when food is cooked.

Water soluble vitamins (the B vitamins and vitamin C) dissolve in water, so they are more easily lost when foods are cooked.

To meet your vitamin needs, select a variety of foods from each food group every day.

Why do we need Vitamin K?

Vitamin K is important because it helps our blood clot normally. If we do not get enough vitamin K, blood can take too long to clot. This can result in an increased risk of death from injuries. Vitamin K is also important for bone health.



Daily Vitamin K Needs	
Children, 1-3 years	30 mcg/day
Children, 4-8 years	55 mcg/day
Males, Females, 9-13 years	60 mcg/day
Males, Females, 14-18 years	75 mcg/day
Males, 19+ years	120 mcg/day
Females, 19+years	90 mcg/day
Pregnancy, Breastfeeding, 14-18 years	75 mcg/day
Pregnancy, Breastfeeding, 19-50 years	90 mcg/day
National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Medicine 2007	

Know how. Know **now**.

How can we get enough vitamin K?

Eating a variety of foods that contain vitamin K is the best way to get the amount we need. Vitamin K can be found in green leafy vegetables, some fruits, and vegetable oils. Typically, the darker green vegetables have a higher vitamin K content.



Best Sources of Vitamin K

Collard greens, cooked, 1 cup	1059 mcg
Spinach, cooked, 1 cup	1027 mcg
Brussel sprouts, cooked, 1 cup	300 mcg
Broccoli, cooked, 1 cup	220 mcg
Cabbage, cooked, 1 cup	163 mcg
Spinach, raw, 1 cup	145 mcg
Asparagus, cooked, 1 cup	144 mcg
Lettuce, green leaf, 1 cup	97 mcg
Broccoli, raw, 1 cup	89 mcg

Good Sources of Vitamin K

Prunes, stewed, 1 cup	65 mcg
Cabbage, raw, 1 cup	53 mcg
Sauerkraut, canned, 1 cup	31 mcg
Kiwi fruit, raw, 1 medium	31 mcg
Blueberries, raw, 1 cup	28 mcg
Dill pickles, 1 pickle	25 mcg
Red or green grapes, raw, 1 cup	23 mcg
Salad dressing, 1 Tbsp	14 mcg



Interactions with Medications

Using **antibiotics** for a long time can kill some of the bacteria that make vitamin K in your intestines and result in a vitamin K deficiency. **Anticoagulants**, or blood-thinners, can also interfere with the normal use of this vitamin. If you take a blood-thinning medication like Coumadin®, you should eat a balanced diet and keep your vitamin K intake consistent from day to day. Do not make changes in your diet or use of supplements without first talking to your healthcare provider.

Sources: University of Florida Extension <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>, Facts about Vitamin K.

National Academy of Sciences. Dietary Reference Intakes. www.nap.edu

USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference Vitamin K <http://www.ars.usda.gov/services/docs.htm?docid=17477>

The Role of Vitamin K and Coumadin Use http://www.coumadin.com/pdf/293US08WA03025_VitaminKBro_Web.pdf