

VITAMIN A

(Retinol)

FACTSHEET

Vitamin A is one of the most versatile vitamins, with roles in such diverse functions as vision, immune defenses, maintenance of body linings and skin, bone and body growth, normal cell development and reproduction. Vitamin A helps tissues in the airways, urinary, and digestive tract as the first line of defense against cold and viruses. Vitamin A is needed everywhere in the body.

Vitamin A deficiency can cause blindness, sickness, death, and in pregnant women can cause adverse birth defects in weight and length of the baby

Food Sources

Vitamin A comes in two forms: Preformed Retinoid and Provitamin Carotenoids.

Provitamin A is found in fruits and vegetables that contain carotenoids, which are plant pigments that are responsible for the red, orange and yellow color and convert through an antioxidant to Vitamin A.

Preformed Vitamin A are foods that come from animals, such as whole eggs, milk, liver and most fortified fat-free and dried nonfat milk solids and are readily available to the body when ingested.

Good Food Sources of Vitamin A: Recommended Dietary Allowances- 900 mcg/day (men) 700 mcg/day (women)			
Tolerable Upper Intake Level: 3,000 mcg/day			
Source	Quantity	Males	Females
Sweet Potato	1 medium	109.8	109.9
Carrots, raw	1 medium	648	651
Butternut Squash	½ cup	576	574
Spinach, raw	3 cups	423	420
Collard Greens	½ cup	657	385
Green Leaf Lettuce	2 ½ cups	315	315
Cantaloupe	1/3 melon	225	224
Pumpkin	1/3 cup	207	203
Red Bell Peppers	1 small	117	119

Diets rich in vitamin A may lower many types of cancer and vitamin A rich foods may decrease the risk of lung cancer.

References:

Dole Nutrition Industries. (2010). The Dole Nutrition Handbook: What To Eat and How To Live For A Longer, Healthier Life. United States

Mayo Clinic. Vitamin A (retinol). N.p. 4 November 2010. Web. 1 June 2010. http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/vitamin-a/NS_patient-vitamina

Sizer, Frances & Whitney, Eleanor (1997). Nutrition Concepts and Controversies (7th ed.). West/Wadsworth International Thomas Publishing Company.