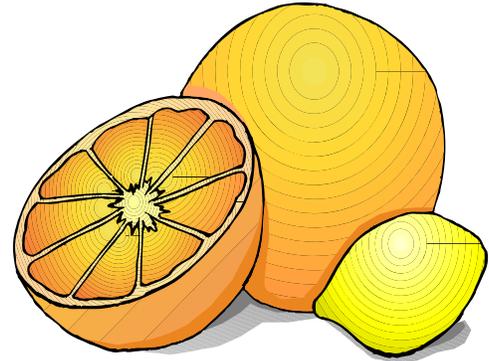


Vitamin C

Most of the vitamin C we eat comes from fruits and vegetables. It is important to eat a variety of fruits and vegetables because they provide us with different vitamins, minerals, fiber, phytochemicals, and antioxidants that promote good health and may reduce the risk of chronic diseases, such as cancer.



Why do we need vitamin C?

Vitamin C is important because it helps our body use iron from the food we eat, heals cuts, makes skin healthy, and keeps our bodies healthy by fighting infections and colds. It is important that we eat foods rich in vitamin C every day because it can not be stored in our body. Not getting enough vitamin C may cause anemia, bleeding gums, sickness, and poor healing of cuts.

How can we get enough vitamin C?

Eating a variety of foods that contain vitamin C is the best way to get the recommended amount of vitamin C. Healthy individuals who eat a balanced diet rarely need to take a vitamin C supplement. Try to eat 2 cups of fruit and 2½ cup of vegetables each day. Eat at least one good source of a vitamin C-rich food each day. (See the list below.)

Daily Vitamin C Needs

Children, 1-3 years	13 mg/day
Children, 4-8 years	22 mg/day
Males, Females, 9-13 years	39 mg/day
Males, 14-18 years	63 mg/day
Females, 14-18 years	56 mg/day
Males, 19+ years	75 mg/day
Females, 19+ years	60 mg/day
Pregnancy, 14-18 years	66 mg/day
Pregnancy, 19-50 years	70 mg/day
Breastfeeding, 14-18 years	96 mg/day
Breastfeeding, 19-50 years	100 mg/day

National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Medicine 2007.

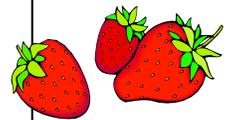
Best Sources of Vitamin C

Guava
Red Bell Peppers
Kiwi
Oranges
100% Fruit Juice
Grapefruit



Good Sources of Vitamin C

Green Bell Peppers
Strawberries
Melons
Broccoli
Tomatoes & Tomato Juice
Sweet Potatoes



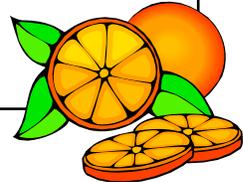
Know how. Know **now**.

Important Tips to Keep Vitamin C in Foods

- Microwave or steam vitamin C-rich foods as quickly as possible using a small amount of water.
- Refrigerate and eat fruits and vegetables as soon as you can after buying them.
- Slice fruits and vegetables just before eating or cooking.
- Choose fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables.

Too Much of a Good Thing?

Do not eat more than 2000 mg/day of vitamin C from either food or supplements. Most of the time excess vitamin C is taken out of your body through urine. Too much vitamin C can cause headaches, diarrhea, and nausea.



30-Second Fruit Salad

Makes 2 servings

- 1 (15 ounce) can mandarin oranges
- 1 banana, sliced
- Maraschino cherries for garnish

1. Open can of mandarin oranges and drain juice.
2. Put mandarin oranges and banana slices in bowl.
3. Top with cherries.

Nutrition Information of Serving: 160 calories, 0 g fat, 0 g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 10 mg sodium, 39 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 13 g sugar, 2 g protein, vitamin A 60%, vitamin C 130%, calcium 4%, iron 4%.

Let's Make Something...A NEP Recipe Collection for Youth



Sources: University of Florida Extension <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>, *Facts about Vitamin C* and Timely Topics, Department of Human Nutrition K-State Research & Extension, *Good Sources of Vitamin C: Fruits and Vegetables "Best Buys."*