

Patient information

Important vitamins in Coeliac disease

Contact dietitian..... Telephone number

When you are first diagnosed with Coeliac disease, the lining of your gut is likely to be damaged. This affects the absorption of certain nutrients from your diet and can lead to nutritional deficiencies such as anaemia (low iron levels).

Strict adherence to a gluten free diet will help to heal your gut and therefore improve the absorption of nutrients from your food, including vitamins and minerals. A healthy balanced diet will help to ensure that you are eating enough of these nutrients.

The list below highlights good sources of the vitamins that are most often poorly absorbed in people with coeliac disease. Your doctor or dietitian will be able to advise you whether you need to increase intake of any of these nutrients in your diet.

Thiamine (Vitamin B₁)

Thiamine is necessary for normal functioning of the nervous system as well as for the release of energy from your food. Good sources of Thiamine include:

- Breakfast cereals (fortified)
- Bread (especially wholemeal or fortified)
- Meat, meat products, fish (e.g, liver*, pork, beef)
- Beans, peas and pulses
- Potatoes, rice
- Milk
- Quorn (check label for gluten free)
- Nuts, seeds.

Overcooking will reduce the amount of thiamine in the food.

Riboflavin (Vitamin B₂)

Riboflavin is necessary for normal growth and helps to maintain membranes, skin, eyes and the nervous system. Good sources of Riboflavin include:

- Milk and dairy produce (e.g. cheese, yoghurt)
- Meat and meat products/extract (e.g. liver*, kidney)
- Cereals and cereal products (fortified)
- Green leafy vegetables (e.g. spinach, kale)
- Eggs
- Yeast extract.

Niacin (Vitamin B₃)

Niacin is important to keep your metabolism functioning normally. Good sources of Niacin include:

- Bread (especially wholemeal) and breakfast cereals (fortified)
- Coffee
- Meat, poultry, offal (e.g. pork, chicken, beef)
- Fish (e.g. salmon or tuna)
- Seeds
- Eggs
- Milk.

Vitamin B₁₂

Vitamin B₁₂ is essential for formation of blood cells and normal functioning of the nervous system. Good sources of Vitamin B₁₂ include:

- Meat and meat products (e.g. beef, pork, chicken)
- Fish, especially oily fish e.g. sardines, mackerel
- Milk and dairy produce (e.g. cheese, yoghurt)
- Eggs
- Breakfast cereals (fortified)
- Yeast products.

N.B. Fermented foods (such as tempeh and miso) or seaweed products (such as spirulina and nori) are not reliable sources of Vitamin B₁₂ (and some of these products are not gluten free).

Folate

Folate plays an important role in production of healthy blood cells and is particularly important for pregnant women and women of child-bearing age. Good sources of Folate include:

- Milk and dairy produce (e.g. cheese, milk, yoghurt)
- Eggs
- Offal (such as liver*, kidney)
- Bread (especially wholemeal or fortified) and breakfast cereals (fortified)
- Vegetables, especially dark green leafy vegetables (e.g. Brussels sprouts, green beans, cauliflower, peas, kale, spinach, broccoli)
- Potatoes
- Some fruits such as oranges, grapefruit, banana, orange juice
- Lentils, beans, sweetcorn
- Nuts and seeds.

Do not overcook foods as the heat can destroy folate.

*It is not recommended to have liver more than once a week. Liver and liver products such as pâté should be avoided if you are pregnant.

Vitamin D

Vitamin D helps to absorb calcium and phosphorus from your diet for healthy bones, muscles and teeth. Good dietary sources of Vitamin D include:

- Oily fish (salmon, sardines, pilchards, herrings)
- Cod liver oil (not suitable for pregnant women)
- Egg yolk (can also buy eggs or milk fortified with Vitamin D)
- Mushrooms
- Meat and offal
- Margarine and breakfast cereals (fortified).

During the exposure to direct sunlight, our skin is able to form Vitamin D. This is how our body gets most of this nutrient. It is now recommended that everyone should consider taking a daily Vitamin D supplement of 10 mcg, particularly during autumn and winter months. These can be purchased over the counter in your local pharmacy or in range of supermarkets and healthy food shops.

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