

A practical guide for dietitians

Other sources of B12

A more sustainable diet does not necessarily have to exclude red meat or dairy altogether – therefore meat and dairy nutrient intakes need not be compromised.

This information sheet provides some useful and practical guidance with regard to plant food sources of nutrients associated with meat and dairy consumption.

Vitamin B12 is needed to prevent megaloblastic anaemia.¹ It is only found naturally in meat, eggs and dairy products, although some plant foods are now fortified with the vitamin.^{2,3,4}

How much do we need?

	Recommended daily intakes mcg Vit B12	Who needs to up their intakes?
2-3 years	0.5	Vegetarians and vegans
4-6 years	0.8	
7-10 years	1.0	
11-14 years	1.2	
15 years and older	1.5	

Top tips for meeting Vitamin B12 needs

- Individuals following a healthy environmentally sustainable diet who include meat, egg and dairy products will have adequate intakes.
- Long-term vegetarians and vegans:
- Should have their vitamin B12 status checked, especially as high folate levels can mask vitamin B12 deficiency.
- Encouraged to consume vitamin B12 fortified foods.
- Take an oral dietary supplement of at least 10mcg per day (and no more than 2mg per day).
- Vitamin B12 fortified plant foods: yeast extract, fortified plant-based drinks and alternatives to yogurt and most fortified breakfast cereals.



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Meeting daily vitamin B12 recommended intakes with fortified foods

Foods fortified with vitamin B12	Vitamin B12 per serve mcg
Small bowl (30g) of fortified breakfast cereal served with 150ml of fortified plant-based drink	1.1
150g serving of a fortified soya alternative to yogurt (plain or fruit)	0.6
Marmite or yeast spread on two toast (~4g)	0.6
Total daily vitamin B12	2.3

Vitamin B12 fortified plant foods²

Food	Serving size household	Serving size g	Vitamin B12 mcg /serving
Fortified plant-based alternatives to milk ⁵	A glass	200ml	0.8
Fortified soya alternative to yogurt ⁶	Average	150g	0.6
Fortified yeast extract	Spread on 2 toast	4g	0.6
Most fortified breakfast cereals (check the label)	Small bowl	30g	0.5-1.0

Animal protein comparisons:

70g serving of beef = 1.4 – 2.1mcg Vitamin B12
200ml semi skimmed milk = 1.8mcg Vitamin B12

References

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