

Know Your Nutrients—Water-Soluble Vitamins

May 2015

Some of you reading this article have a wealth of knowledge about the basic vitamins our bodies need and use to maintain health. For the others who may not know (or remember) much about vitamins at all, this is for you!

Ask the Agent

Q: I take a daily multi-vitamin. Do they help me stay healthy?

A: Maybe yes, maybe no. For most people, eating a well-balanced diet will ensure they are getting their daily nutritional needs met. However, there are some medications that can interfere with that natural process, so a physician may recommend taking supplements. However, the research on the benefits of this practice is conflicted, meaning that some studies have shown there is no measurable impact on the health of those taking vitamins other studies have shown a marginal impact. Whenever possible, eating nutrient-rich foods in their natural form is the best source of nutrients needed for healthy body functioning.

For more information call the Geary County K-State Research and Extension office at 785-238-4161.



There are two classifications of vitamins – water-soluble and fat-soluble.

Water soluble vitamins are absorbed into our body through liquid. They cannot be stored for later use, so whatever our body needs is all that will be absorbed on a daily basis. The rest leaves our bodies as waste. Since this is a daily process, we need to make sure we get these vitamins in our diet every day.



Water-soluble vitamins are easily destroyed when we cook and prepare the food in which they can be found. Some people try to compensate low intake of these vitamins by taking supplements, but it is not recommended since they cannot be stored.

Water-Soluble Vitamins	Why We Need Them	Excellent Food Sources
Vitamin B-complex family: thiamin (vitamin B1), riboflavin (vitamin B2), niacin (vitamin B3), vitamin B6 (pyridoxine), folate (folic acid), vitamin B12, biotin and pantothenic acid	They function as coenzymes that help the body obtain energy from food. The B vitamins are also important for normal appetite, good vision, healthy skin, nervous system, and red blood cell formation.	Found in a wide range of foods such as: cereal grains, meat, poultry, eggs, fish, milk, legumes and fresh vegetables.
Vitamin C (also known as ascorbic acid or ascorbate)	Vitamin C benefits the body by holding cells together through collagen synthesis; collagen is a connective tissue that holds muscles, bones, and other tissues together. Vitamin C also aids in wound healing, bone and tooth formation, strengthening blood vessel walls, improving immune system function, increasing absorption and utilization of iron, and acting as an antioxidant.	Citrus fruits: one orange, a kiwi fruit, 6 oz. of grapefruit juice or 1/3 cup of chopped sweet red pepper each supply enough Vitamin C for one day.

Your daily food intake should include a variety of foods that contain these essential vitamins to keep your body functioning properly. Take a moment to reflect on what foods you tend to select. Are you getting the right balance to ensure you are meeting your daily needs? Next month, I will share similar information about the fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E, & K.

Source: Colorado State University publication no. 9.312 "Water-Soluble Vitamins: B-Complex and Vitamin C"

Focus on Family

I have often heard the saying "Plan for the worst, while hoping for the best." We are approaching the height of severe storm season in Kansas. With this season, we need to be thinking about related unexpected emergencies. The Federal Emergency Management Agency recommends that every family take a proactive approach to planning for the worst. The Agency encourages families to discuss their personal emergency management plan and encourage every member in the family to contribute to the process:

Who can you contact that lives in a different town than you do? This should be someone the entire family knows and can trust. In the event that the family is separated, it helps to have someone to report to that everyone else in the family will be contacting, as well.

Where will you meet after the emergency has passed? Identify both a neighborhood location and a regional location that everyone is familiar with.

What are the names, addresses, and phone numbers of the parents' employer? What are the names,

addresses, and schools that the children attend?

Create a medical snapshot of each person in the family. What medications are they on? What health risks do they have? Who are their doctors and how can they be reached?

Make sure your plan has information about the insurance coverages you have. Include company name, policy owner, number, and contact information. Include home, auto, and health insurance policies on this list.

Being proactive by creating a family emergency plan is very important. Practicing that plan a few times each year will be time well spent if your family ever experiences an emergency. House fires, ice storms, and tornadoes are events we can and should prepare for. Nobody "plans" to get in a tornado, but everyone should PLAN how they would survive one if it were to strike where they live.

There is a helpful family communication plan template at FEMA website: <http://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan> Don't put it off any longer. Create your family plan with the hopes that you will never have to use it!

BIG Bucks Savings

Who doesn't like to save money on their needs so that they can have more to spend on their wants?

Here are a few easy tips that can make your supermarket savings add up:

- Keep a grocery list. Making extra trips to the store for the forgotten items costs you extra time and money (for gas and items that aren't needed). Keep your list where it is easily accessible.
- Garbage check. Tossing food into the trash costs us money. When we throw away leftovers, it is like throwing money into the trash can. Reduce waste by making less or by planning leftovers into your menu every day.
- Don't shop when you're hungry. You will buy more than you need, buy things to snack on, or buy things that are not on your list. Eating before you shop can save you money AND calories.
- Take your lunch. Eating out at noon can easily cost \$5 or more. That adds up to \$100 a month if you are a frugal consumer – more likely it will be close to \$150!
- Cut it out! Using coupons is a helpful practice when it comes to saving money on your food bill.

However, make sure you only use coupons for foods you normally would eat. You can access a variety of couponing sites on the internet to help you save even more!

- Check expiration dates. You might have to dig clear to the back of the shelf to find a date that is farther out. If you purchase food that is on sale because it is nearing the expiration date, make sure you use that product soon.
- Take a tidbit taste. If you want to try something new, go for it. However, start with the smallest package you can to take a taste test before you commit to the economy size package. You don't want to be stuck with the big box if your family doesn't seem to like it.
- The cost of convenience food can destroy your food budget. As a rule of thumb, the quicker, the easier, the more costly. Cut the fruits and vegetables yourself and you can experience substantial savings.

Creating new habits can be a challenge. Look at the list above and identify two things you will do to change your food purchasing habits. Each month, add another two changes you will make. In no time, you'll see the fruits of your labor (pun intended)! *Source: University of Nebraska Lincoln Extension publication "Supermarket Savings"*

Healthy Habits

Chomp, Chomp, Crunch

What are your favorite fresh vegetables? Do they range in flavor, color, and methods of preparation? For example, do you like red, yellow, or green tomatoes best? Do you like to eat them sliced, or diced into a salsa or pasta salad dish? Vegetables offer us a great wealth of nutrients that help keep our body healthy. Eating fresh vegetables offer us greater nutritional value than cooked vegetables (see the front page article). If we eat our fresh vegetables in a variety of forms, we can reduce the boredom we might experience over the course of time.

For example, let's look at the common carrot. You can buy fresh carrots that are whole, petite pre-peeled, sliced into chips, shredded, crinkle cut into coins, in pre-portioned snack bags, or pre-cut into sticks. That is just 7 of the different ways you can eat carrots. Who could get bored with that?

Here's a great kid-friendly recipe that uses fresh shredded carrots:

Source: <http://www.grimway.com/carrots/recipe>

Carrot Delight Salad

Ingredients:

1 cup(s) grapes
1 cup(s) sour cream**
3 T honey
1/4 cup(s) lemon juice
1 cup(s) mini marshmallows
4 cup(s) carrots, shredded

Directions: Combine shredded carrots and lemon juice. Let stand in refrigerator for 30 minutes. Add mini marshmallows and grapes or pineapple tidbits. Combine honey with sour cream. Toss dressing and carrot mixture together.

Nutrition Information: 126 calories; 5 g total fat; 3 g saturated fat; 0 g trans fat; 1 g monounsaturated fat; 0 g polyunsaturated fat; 12 mg cholesterol; 63 mg sodium; 21 g carbohydrate; 2 g fiber; 1 g protein

**You can reduce the fat content and total calories per serving by using fat free sour cream in this recipe!

Connecting with Kids

The transition to summer is often difficult for both parent and child. The rules are likely different from what they followed at school. Kids may perceive that they will get to do whatever they want in the summer. Parents may struggle with the daily reconnection that summer schedules often afford. Instead of pushing them to get homework done, parents may find that they are pushing their children to be active, eat healthy, limit video game time, or not to sleep until noon. As you transition with your school-aged kiddos, here are three key areas you can focus on to help connect better with your children:

Spend Time Together. This doesn't mean sitting in the same room. This does mean you need to engage in play with your kids, talk to them about things they are interested in, and give them the opportunity to tell you how they would like to spend time together. There are so many games and activities that you can do with them that will help you know them better and reconnect with their skills and interests. Make time for them every day.

Listen To Them. Ask them about what they are thinking or what they are interested in. Start conversations with something positive you have noticed about them.

When you listen to them:

- Get on your child's level.
- Avoid distractions (like your cell phone).
- Maintain eye contact.
- Use a gentle tone of voice when you respond to them.

Express affection in word and actions. Tell your child every day that you love her/him. Show them affection in the way they are comfortable. Tweens tend to shy away from the hugs that they appreciated only a few months ago. Shake hands, hip bump, or give high-fives if that is what they prefer. Let your child know that you like having them around and are glad to see them when you get home.

The stronger you can build your connection with your child, the more smoothly the transitions to summer will be and the more enjoyable your June, July and August months will be!

Upcoming Geary County Extension Programs

**Requires pre-registration.

**May
25—**

Memorial Day Holiday –Extension office closed.

28—

EEU Joint Meeting—4-H Senior Citizens Building beginning at 1:00 p.m. The program, “Extension Goals: 2015”, will be presented by Deb Andres, FCS Agent, Geary County K-State Research and Extension

**June
1—July 2**

Transitions to Healthy Eating—summer nutrition education classes being offered as part of the USD 475 Transitions program at Junction City Middle School and Fort Riley Middle School. The audience will consist of incoming 6th grade students who are being oriented to the middle school environment.

June 13 **National Festival of Breads**—A free all-day event for the bread making enthusiast and master, alike. Call the Extension office for more information at 238-4161.

June 18—24 Geary County 4-Hers at Rocksprings 4-H Camp

Fair books are available at the Geary County Extension office Monday—Friday from 8:00—5:00. Open class books will also be distributed to area businesses and community centers. Pick one up today and find out how you can be involved in this year’s Geary County Free Fair!

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Geary County Office information: <http://www.geary.ksu.edu/>
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