

Functions and Sources of Key Nutrients

Nutrient	Function	Examples of Food Sources
Protein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> builds and repairs body tissues builds antibodies, the blood components which fight infection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> meat, fish, poultry, eggs, cheese, milk and milk products, legumes, nuts, seeds
Carbohydrate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> supplies energy assists in the utilization of fats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> bread, cereals, pasta, rice, potatoes, fruit, table sugars, syrup
Fat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> supplies energy aids in the absorption of fat soluble vitamins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> margarine, butter, oils, salad dressings, nuts, cheese, meats
Thiamin (Vitamin B₁)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> releases energy from carbohydrate aids normal growth and appetite 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> pork, organ meats, enriched and wholegrain bread and cereals, nuts, seeds, legumes
Riboflavin (Vitamin B₂)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintains healthy skin and eyes maintains a normal nervous system releases energy to body cells during metabolism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> organ meats, white flour, whole grain flour, breads, milk
Niacin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aids normal growth and development maintains a normal nervous system and gastrointestinal tract 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> organ meats, poultry, peanut butter, legumes, milk, eggs, fish, beef
Folacin (folic acid)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aids red blood cell formation helps to prevent neural tube birth defects (example; spina bifida) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> organ meats, nuts, legumes, eggs, green leafy vegetables, oranges, bananas, mushrooms, cereals enriched with folacin.
Vitamin B₁₂ (cobalamin)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aids in red blood cell formation maintains healthy nerve and gastrointestinal tissues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> organ meats, beef, pork, fish, shellfish, milk and milk products, eggs
Vitamin C (ascorbic acid)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintains healthy teeth and gums maintains strong blood vessel walls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> citrus fruits, broccoli, cauliflower, green pepper, strawberries, potatoes, fortified juices

Reference: Health and Welfare Canada Federal-Provincial Subcommittee on Nutrition, Nutrition in Pregnancy National Guidelines, Minister of National Health and Welfare. 1986

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Vitamin B₆	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aids in protein metabolism for production of antibodies and red blood cells 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> organ meats, bananas, beef, ham, egg yolk, fish, cabbage, spinach, cereals enriched with B6
Vitamin A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aids normal bone and tooth development promotes good night vision maintains the health of the skin and membranes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> organ meats, egg yolk, dark green leafy or yellow vegetables, apricots, peaches, tomatoes, milk and milk products
Vitamin D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enhances calcium and phosphorus utilization in the formation and maintenance of healthy bones and teeth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> milk and margarine fortified with vitamin D, organ meats, salmon, tuna, eggs
Vitamin E (tocopherol)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> protects the fat in body tissues from oxidation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> vegetable oils, margarine, salad dressings, egg yolk
Calcium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aids in the formation and maintenance of strong bones and teeth promotes healthy nerve function and normal blood clotting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> milk and milk products, sardines, salmon with bones, mackerel, oysters, soybeans, tofu, nuts, seeds
Iron	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> combines with protein to form hemoglobin, the red blood cell constituent which transports oxygen and carbon dioxide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> organ meats, red meats, enriched breads and cereals, legumes, dried fruits
Phosphorus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aids in formation and maintenance of strong bones and teeth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cheese, peanuts, fish, beef, pork, bread, eggs, milk
Magnesium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aids in formation and maintenance of strong bones and teeth aids in energy metabolism and tissue formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> nuts, soybeans, whole grains, molasses, shellfish, spinach, liver, beef
Zinc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aids in energy metabolism and tissue formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shellfish, organ meats, meat, fish, poultry, nuts, eggs, legumes, soy products, whole grains, seeds and sprouts
Iodine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aids in function of the thyroid gland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> seafood such as lobster, oysters, shrimp; iodized salt
Fibre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides undigestible bulk which encourages the normal elimination of body wastes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> whole grain breads and cereals, fruits, vegetables

For 24-hour health information and advice, call **Calgary Health Link** at **943-LINK** (5465) in Calgary or **1-866-408-LINK** (5465) toll free.

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