




AN APPLE A DAY




The word 'vitamin' comes from the word 'vital' meaning necessary for life. The best way to get your vitamins is from food. That's because foods evolved with a certain level and mixture of vitamins, minerals and other nutrients that work with each other to support and compliment their individual roles. With a varied diet, it's easy to get all the nutrients you need. Below are groups of foods that contain abundant amounts of the vital nutrients. Getting your child to eat something from each group, every day, or several times a week is nature's best insurance policy for good health.

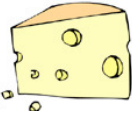
- 1. Oranges,  tangerines, grapefruit, red peppers, spinach, and broccoli:** Getting your child to eat one or more of these foods every day will provide some of the 35 to 40 milligrams for vitamin C that a 1 to 4 year old requires. Kids need to get some vitamin C rich food daily because it cannot be stored in the body. Vitamin C is important for fighting infections, supporting and repairing muscles, bones, teeth and skin, and for producing hormones that regulate basal metabolic rate and body temperature.

- 2. Fortified milk, cooked salmon, tuna canned in oil:**  This group of foods is a good source of Vitamin D. Vitamin D is essential for promoting calcium absorption and bone growth. Without it, bones can become thin, brittle, or misshapen. Very few foods naturally contain vitamin D, (fish such as salmon, tuna, and mackerel are among the best sources) so government required the fortification of milk. Products made from milk, such as cheese and ice cream, are generally not fortified. Besides these foods, the other way to get your daily requirement from the sun. Our bodies can manufacture the vitamin D that we need if given enough sunlight....a minimum of 15 minutes of direct sunlight a day is necessary. Be particularly vigilant about getting vitamin D in the winter if you live in northern climates where daily sunlight is minimal. Extra can be stored in the body, so getting some vitamin D regularly is important, but it doesn't have to be every day.

- 3. Pumpkin, squash, spinach, carrots,**  **sweet potatoes, apricots, mangos:** All of these foods contain rich amounts of beta-carotene, the material your body uses to make vitamin A. Vitamin A is a potent anti-oxidant that helps to prevent and repair cell damage. It is also essential for good vision, especially night vision. Your body can store vitamin A, so this nutrient isn't needed daily, but be sure to eat several servings a week from this list of foods.

- 4. Pumpkin and squash seeds, molasses, wheat germ, dried**

prunes, raisins, turkey,  **, beef, iron-fortified cereals.** All of these foods contain iron. Iron's main job is to transport oxygen around the body. Many children do not get the iron they need. Because iron can be stored in the body, getting daily iron isn't absolutely necessary, although it is advised.

- 5. Dairy products,**  **, canned salmon, calcium fortified juices:** These foods provide the essential nutrient, calcium. Calcium is needed for bone growth and strength and without it, children would not optimize their bone development, and child athletes would suffer more breaks and fractures. Calcium is needed every day due to the continual turnover of calcium from the bone.