



Ask the Expert: What is the Best Way to get Vitamins and Minerals?



Written by Adina Miller, Purdue University Dietetics & Nutrition, Fitness, and Health '24

Vitamins and minerals are important nutrients that help your body function to keep you healthy. For example, vitamins and minerals can boost your body's immune system, which is the system that fights germs, so that you do not get sick. So, how should you feed your body these vitamins and minerals? By eating a mix of foods from each of the main food groups, like, fruits, vegetables, proteins, low-fat dairy, and whole grains! There are so many multivitamin and mineral supplement pills out there, but these pills do not work against sickness and disease to give your body all of the nutrients it needs like food does. Instead of looking for pills to get nutrients, try to get your nutrients from food.

Eating a mix of foods from all of the food groups or eating in a well-balanced way, is the best way to give your body nutrients it needs, so it can fuel your immune system to keep you healthy. A well-balanced meal is a colorful plate that includes all of the basic food groups: grains, vegetables, fruit, dairy, and protein foods. Below are examples of foods that you can make your own well-balanced nutrient dense meals with.

- Grains: look for whole grain products like whole grain pasta, bagels, tortillas, bread, and rice.
- Vegetables: look for colorful greens, red, orange, yellow, and white vegetables like broccoli, avocado, pinto beans, peppers, sweet potatoes, squash, and cauliflower.
- Fruits: look for colorful fruits like blackberries, orange juice, watermelon, apples, and bananas.
- Dairy: look for low-fat dairy like 2%, 1%, or skim milk, yogurt, and cheese.
- Protein: look for low sodium choices and foods low in saturated fats like lean cuts of beef, poultry, fish, eggs, nuts and seeds, and beans.

Since each food offers a unique mix of vitamins and minerals, eating from the different food groups means a better chance to get all of the vitamins and minerals you need.

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Food Safety: Avoiding Food Poisoning

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Food poisoning happens when you get sick from eating food that is spoiled with bacteria or viruses. There are four easy steps you can take to make sure the food you are eating is safe to eat:

1. The first step is to clean. Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water when you are touching, eating, or cooking foods. Before and after you cook, wash all cooking tools, and all counters that the food will touch. Cleaning places and things that foods will touch kills germs that could make you sick. Also rinse all fruit and vegetable produce with water.
2. Next up is separating your foods. Cross contamination is when foods spread bacteria to other foods through touching. Raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs can cause the most harm, so always keep these foods separated by using different cutting boards and plates, and keeping them separate when shopping and storing them in your fridge.
3. The next step is cooking to high enough temperatures. Food should be cooked at temperatures that will kill the harmful germs that cause food poisoning. This temperature may vary depending on the food. Always read the labels of foods to find information on safe heating temperatures or visit the website below.
4. The last step is to store foods correctly. Your fridge temperature should be at or below 40 degrees F. Make sure your food items are not out of the fridge for more than 2 hours, or else they will spoil. Do not thaw foods from the freezer out on the counter. These frozen foods should be thawed in the fridge, in cold water, or in the microwave.

sources: <https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/keep-food-safe.html>

Chicken Salad and Peach Sandwich

Ingredients (2 servings)

- 4 slices of whole grain bread
- 1/2 cup cooked chicken (diced)
- 1/2 cup canned peach slices* (drained and diced)
- 1 small celery stalk
- 1/2 cup apples* (Fuji, Gala, or Braeburn)
- 1 small onion
- 1 1/2 tablespoons mayonnaise (nonfat)
- 1 tablespoon chopped walnut

Directions

1. Mix together the chicken, apples, peaches, celery, onion, walnuts and mayonnaise in a small bowl.
2. Spoon mixture onto 2 slices of the bread.



Nutrition Facts (per 1 sandwich)

Calories: 296
 Protein: 18 g
 Carbs: 44 g
 Fat: 5g

*foods included in the TEFAP (The
 Emergency Food Assistance
 Program

sources: <https://www.myplate.gov/recipes/myplate-cnpp/chicken-salad-and-peach-sandwich>

Eating Right: Which Foods Have Which Vitamins and Minerals

Written by Adina Miller, Purdue University Dietetics & Nutrition, Fitness, and Health '24

A well-balanced meal is a meal that includes a mix of foods from all of the food groups and contains many vitamins and minerals. So, what important vitamins and minerals are supplied by foods from the different food groups? See the list of nutrients and food groups and example images of foods within each group shown below.

Vitamins / Minerals :	Food groups :
Calcium helps your bones grow, helps your muscles flex, and prevents blood clots.	Milk, yogurt, and cheese.
Fiber helps your body digest food, and it helps keep steady blood sugar levels.	Whole grains, fruits, and vegetables.
Iron is good for red blood cells and several enzymes.	Red meat, fortified cereal, and eggs.
Magnesium helps with your heart rhythm, bone strength, and how well your muscles and nerves work.	Nuts, dairy, potatoes, and whole wheat.
Potassium helps your body keep a stable blood pressure and helps lower the chances for kidney stones.	Bananas, potatoes, fruits, vegetables, and milk.
Vitamin D is good for your bones, muscles, and immune system.	Fish oils, fortified milk products, eggs, and cereals



sources: <https://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/guide/vitamins-and-minerals-good-food-sources#1> , https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSWxrP_mfuOzoZ6JdzAfEkSWfLdRNhV_9ODxg&usqp=CAU , <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcTIQ-ENDdE-WW-W5EwVyuAQQQTqT-dXwt6tAg&usqp=CAU> , <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQ00e0CYVol0QQS6XmVc6u7FKrX0qI9uiA0g&usqp=CAU> , https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcRV_LyBZT1UjyhVMO4JhK8rtYdpG-sOlycuLQ&usqp=CAU , <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcRKfZAvT6nJ2K3k2oKEXna445cBUJ9nR1rxZA&usqp=CAU> , https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQebXNfmJVkPRRsmh03b_BKqUhlqV4HxBvdA&usqp=CAU



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This newsletter is edited by Adina Miller and Heather A. Eicher-Miller, PhD and is created by the Eicher-Miller Lab in the Department of Nutrition Science at Purdue University. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

In The News: Fundraiser Event to Fight Hunger

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There are some exciting food bank related fundraisers coming up in several regions around the state!

The Lafayette Hunger Hike is a 3k walk and celebration that will be on September 19 at 1 pm. The location of the celebration is at Riehle Plaza (200 N 2nd St, Lafayette, IN 47901) at 1 pm. The walk will begin at 2 pm and will go along the Wabash Heritage Trail.

Northwest Indiana Ride the Region is a motorcycle ride that brings awareness and raises funds for those facing hunger. The ride will be on September 4 from 9 am to 12 pm. The location is at the Food Bank of NWI 6940 Broadway Merrillville IN 46410.

Crown Point Hunger Hike will be happening on September 18 from 9 am to 12 pm. The location of it will be the Lake County Fairgrounds (899-857 Lake St, Crown Point, IN 46307).



sources: <https://www.hungerhike.org/sunday-3k-walk/>,
<https://foodbanknwi.org/events/ride-the-region/> <https://foodbanknwi.org/events/the-hunger-hike/>