



Essentials™



The Essentials for good health!

For the first time, the recent dietary guidelines released by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) focus on regular exercise as well as a healthy diet as being a side-by-side essentials for good health. It's a powerful combo for body and mind health.

So what makes a diet healthy?

A wide variety of foods from all of the food groups is the cornerstone to healthy eating. These groups are:

Breads and cereals: Including rice, pasta, couscous, noodles and quinoa. Choose wholegrain varieties when you can to provide slow release energy (low GI), fibre, B vitamins, iron and more. Aim for up to six serves per day.

Vegetables: All types are great choices including fresh, frozen vegetables, legumes (such as baked beans, lentils and chick peas). They're low in calories and high in nutrients, phytochemicals, antioxidants, fibre, vitamins A and C, folate, fibre and water. Aim for five or more serves per day.

Fruit: rich in water-soluble vitamins like vitamin C and folate, fruits also supply slow-release carbohydrates, energy and fibre so satisfy your sweet tooth the natural way! Aim for two serves daily.

Dairy or calcium-enriched soya: Go for low-fat dairy products and/or calcium-enriched soya products to provide calcium, protein and more. Aim for three or more serves per day.

Meat and meat alternatives: This includes meat, poultry, fish, seafood, eggs, legumes, nuts and pulses. Aim for two to three serves daily.

Is your diet perfection on a plate?

Most of us don't eat the perfect diet – at least not all of the time. And that's where USANA's nutritional supplements can help. They're formulated to fill nutritional gaps and ensure that nutrient wise, you don't fall short.

Ages, stages and nutritional needs

Your nutrient needs change with the different ages and stages of your life. Nutrient needs also vary according to your sex and any illnesses you have – and the medicines taken to alleviate the symptoms you take, too.

USANA founder, Dr Myron Wentz, developed the ground-breaking range of vitamins believing that if a wide mix of nutrients – vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients/antioxidants – could boost health at the cell level, that it could also boost the health of the whole body. The result was the award winning **Essentials™** range. Taking **Essentials** regularly can help to prevent deficiencies by providing the vital vitamins and minerals needed to boost good health. They may not affect how you feel day-to-day, but they top up any low levels which is important for long-term good health.



Eating and exercise - balance is the big focus!

The recent dietary guidelines from Australia's National Health and Medical Research Council have focussed on the importance of energy balance.

So, as well as eating more antioxidant rich vegetables, fruit and wholegrains whilst cutting down on fatty foods (especially those high in saturated fats) and consuming less sugar and salt, the guidelines also focus on energy balance. That means making sure that the energy (in calories consumed) is not more than the energy used in the form of exercise. Being physically active is important not just for general health and lung health and to boost your mood, it's also a vital component if you want to prevent and/or avoid weight gain. The incidence of overweight and obesity now affects 60 per cent of adults (one quarter of all children) in Australia. And this means big problems for where future health is concerned from increasing your chances of type 2 diabetes to heart disease, some cancers and more.

To protect your heart and lungs, 20-30 minutes of physical activity is recommended. But keeping weight under control requires longer bouts of physical activity – experts suggest between 45-60 minutes daily.





Nutrition from foods: Who might need a nutritional boost?

Nutritional shortfalls can occur in the case of:

- 1. Junk food junkies.** Many fast foods are high on fat, salt and sugar and low on fibre and nutrients. So, your body actually uses up stores of nutrients in order to process the nutrient-depleted eats in fast foods.
- 2. Athletes.** Exercise-conscious athletes may have increased needs for nutrients – that's because vigorous training increases the production of free radicals which in turn may raise the body's need for antioxidant vitamins (beta-carotene, bioflavonoids, vitamin C and vitamin E). To maintain strong, healthy bones and joints, getting enough calcium and iron are a must. **Essentials** contains components that can help your body absorb more iron from foods (although it does not contain it) so try to take them with meals.
- 3. People on restrictive diets.** This includes long-term weight losers, meal-skippers, those with food intolerances. People who find it difficult to eat healthily with busy/stressful lifestyles.
- 4. People with chronic conditions.** Digestive disorders that affect the intestines (where foods are absorbed into the body).
- 5. Older people.** Simply getting older can affect your vitamin and mineral intake and how your body uses nutrients. You tend to need less food with age. Your body also gets less efficient at absorbing and using the nutrients you do consume. So, vitamin B12, for example, which is quite a big nutrient for the body to absorb, gets more difficult to absorb with age. Yet, the need for high quality with age nutrition remains as important as ever.
- 6. People who are housebound.** Studies show that surprisingly, many of us in Australia and New Zealand fall short of the so called sunshine vitamin, vitamin D. This has a wide range of functions including bolstering immune health and maintaining healthy, strong bones and teeth, lowering the risk of chronic diseases.

If you have limited exposure to sunlight, if you're dark-skinned and/or if you cover your skin for cultural reasons, you could be at risk of low vitamin D levels. Fair skinned people may also be D-deficient (as they may avoid the sun due to fear of sunburn). People who are very overweight or obese may also need a supplement as despite the fact that the vitamin D is produced by the body, it gets stuck in layers of fat and it can't be used by the body.

Nutritional supplements and ill health

Some medical conditions make it more difficult for the body to absorb nutrients properly. These include conditions that affect the gut. Also, if you're already low in certain nutrients, taking a nutritional supplement can help to raise levels to normal much faster than foods can. And, if your diet or appetite is restricted whether this is for ethical or religious reasons or simply don't eat a healthy diet, you can replace some of what you're missing with the superb range of nutrients in **Essentials**.



Pregnancy Essentials

Until quite recently, the focus on folic acid was the only real focus as a nutritional supplement during pregnancy. But now, the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) recommends a number of nutrients for pregnant and breastfeeding women. Based on the latest available evidence, the key nutrients for pregnant women are:

Folic acid

Getting enough folate/folic acid in pregnancy is vital because it helps to reduce the risk of neural tube defects. This is where the spinal cord does not close properly and can cause varying degrees of disability in the unborn baby.

Bread (apart from organic kinds) is now fortified with folic and a slice of bread provides around 40 micrograms of folic acid. Other food sources of folate include leafy green vegetables (steam lightly or stir-fry to retain the delicate B vitamin), leeks, oranges, wholegrains wheat germ, starchy vegetables like parsnips and potato, Vegemite and Marmite. Unsalted nuts also provide folate – but not the roasted kind as folate is lost during the cooking process.

As well as eating a variety of folate-containing fruits and vegetables, the government strongly advises that women take a folic acid supplement (folate and folic acid are the same vitamin but it's called folic acid when in supplement form). It is best to take this for three months before conception if possible and for the first three months of pregnancy.





Supplemental information

- All pregnant women should take a supplement that contains folic acid.
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) suggests: 'Look for supplements that contain at least 400 micrograms of folic acid'.
- **Essentials** provides 500mcg folic acid per daily dose making it a good choice during pregnancy.
- Women carrying more than one baby, those who are taking certain anticonvulsants, women with diabetes and those who have a tendency towards blood clotting or a family history of neural tube defects need to take a much higher dose of folic acid – talk with your doctor for individual advice.

Iodine

After milk-producers switched from using iodine-based to chlorine-based cleaners to clean dairy equipment, and more people ditched iodised table salt for gourmet salt – or much less in general – iodine deficiency became an issue in Australia and New Zealand. Mild-to-moderate iodine deficiency has been seen in Australia and New Zealand since the early 2000s.

According to FSANZ, 'Iodine is in many foods, but much of the Australian and New Zealand food supply is now low in iodine, which has led to widespread iodine deficiency.' Also: 'The actual iodine content of food will vary depending on where it is grown and how it is made.'

Now that bread manufacturers use iodised salt to make bread (except organic bread), many of us get more iodine, but not enough to meet the needs of pregnant and breastfeeding women. Lack of iodine can lead to learning difficulties in the baby. Seafood is a good source of iodine as is seaweed and sushi but sushi is not recommended in pregnancy because it contains raw fish which should be avoided during pregnancy to prevent the small risk illness/mercury build up.

Supplemental information

- All women should take a supplement that contains iodine.
- During pregnancy, the NHMRC and the New Zealand Ministry of Health recommend that women take 220µg of iodine per day. Women who are breastfeeding should have 270µg per day.
- **Essentials** contains 300mcg iodine per four tablet daily dose so it's suitable for pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Vitamin D

Vitamin D helps the body absorb and use calcium and has many other vital functions. Around one in three of us has mild D-deficiency. And, according to a study by Deakin University, nearly three quarters (73 per cent) of people have levels considered by many experts to be below the optimal for musculoskeletal health.

For pregnant and breastfeeding women and for all adults up to the age of 70, a daily dose of 15mcg (or 600 IU) of dietary vitamin D is recommended daily. Scientists are continuing to find more and more problems relating to inadequate vitamin D and have set the safe upper limit as being 100mcg (4000 IU) .

Supplemental information

- Most pregnancy supplements provide less than the recommended adequate intake of 600 IU so if you're at increased risk of deficiency, consult your doctor for advice.
- **Essentials** contains 20 mcg (800 IU) per daily dose of four tablets.

Vitamin B12

Vitamin B12 is needed for the development of the nerves and for healthy blood. It's found mostly in animal products (such as meat, eggs and dairy). Algae is a vegan source but vegan mums-to-be may need a supplement of vitamin B12 daily.

Supplemental information

- **Essentials** contains 200mcg per four tablet dose.
- Unlike some B12 containing nutrition supplements, **Essentials** is suitable for vegetarians



Vitamin B12 is needed for the development of the nerves and for healthy blood. It's found mostly in animal products (such as meat, eggs and dairy).





But it takes two to make a baby...

Poor motility (how fast sperm swims) is a sign of DNA damage to the sperm and can be caused by free radicals.

According to Dr Anne Clarke from Sydney's Fertility First which aims to help couples with pregnancy: 'If more than 20 per cent of the sperm have evidence of DNA damage, the couple's chances of getting pregnant is significantly reduced and the risk of miscarriage is three to four times higher.'

Although diet is not the only factor, it is an important one. So a healthy antioxidant rich diet is an essential for men, too. Dr Clarke says that around one in eight men have an enzyme that makes it difficult to absorb folate from the diet. And, folate deficiency together with low levels of vitamin B6 and vitamin B12 are linked with DNA damage in sperm and that's where a supplement can help build up healthy levels. Dr Anne Clark from Sydney's Fertility First says that a high quality multivitamin supplement will provide enough folate and taking it for just two months can often reverse sperm DNA fragmentation. Talk to your doctor for more information.



Calcium

The major mineral that makes up the skeleton and bones is also needed for healthy nerve conduction and heart muscle function. Your body becomes more efficient at retaining calcium as the baby relies entirely on calcium from his or her mother.

Women who don't consume dairy products and/or have a vitamin D deficiency may need a supplement. Your doctor can tell you more.

Iron

During pregnancy, your body needs more iron for the increased blood vessel production for mother, developing baby and for the baby's lifeline, the placenta. The baby also lays down a store of iron to last for the first six months or so of life (breast milk is naturally low in iron).

Your body becomes much more efficient at absorbing iron whilst iron losses are reduced during pregnancy as menstruation stops. If your stores are very low, you may need to get more from supplements for example if you are carrying more than one baby you can run low on iron. Women who are vegan and vegetarian or teenage mums-to-be or women with multiple pregnancy may need iron supplementation. Speak with your doctor about whether you need iron supplements during pregnancy as iron can be toxic (poisonous) in large amounts .

For more information on healthy eating in pregnancy, log onto: <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/consumerinformation/pregnancyandhealthyeating/>

Do not exceed the stated dose except on medical advice. Seek expert medical advice if your child has a neural tube defect or spina bifida/neural tube defects.

Vitamin supplements should not replace a balanced diet.

USE ONLY AS DIRECTED. ALWAYS READ THE LABEL.

References

Food Standards Australia New Zealand. Iodine in food last reviewed September 2012. Accessed 22 March 2013. Available from: <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/scienceandeducation/factsheets/factsheets/iodinefortification/iodineinfood.cfm>

NHMRC Public Statement. Iodine supplementation for pregnant and breastfeeding women. Accessed 22 March 2013. Available from: http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/new45_statement.pdf

Vitamin D deficiency strikes one-third of Australian Deakin University 16 January 2012. Accessed 22 March 2013. Available from: <http://www.deakin.edu.au/news/2012/160112/vitaminDdeficiency.php>

Office of Dietary Supplements. National Institutes of Health. Dietary Supplement Fact Sheet: Vitamin D. Last reviewed 24 June 2011. Accessed 22 March 2013. Available from: <http://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/VitaminD-QuickFacts/>

Better Health Channel. Pregnancy and diet. Last updated 26 February 2013. Accessed 22 March 2013. Available from: http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Pregnancy_and_diet



Essentials™

