

WHAT IS VITAMIN C?

Vitamin C, also known as ascorbic acid, is a water-soluble nutrient found in many foods. Water-soluble vitamins dissolve in water and are not stored by the body. Therefore, the body requires a continuous daily supply in the diet. Vitamin C acts as an antioxidant, helping to protect cells from the damage caused by free radicals. Free radicals can harm cells, tissues and organs.

The body also needs vitamin C to make collagen, a protein required to help wounds heal.

How much do I need?

The best way to get the daily requirement of vitamin C is to eat a wide variety of fruits and vegetables.

Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDAs) for vitamin C

Men: 90 mg

Women: 75 mg

Am I getting enough?

Most people in the United States get enough vitamin C from foods and beverages. However, certain groups of people are more likely than others to have trouble getting enough vitamin C:

- People who smoke and those who are exposed to secondhand smoke, in part because smoke increases the amount of vitamin C that the body needs to repair damage caused by free radicals. People who smoke need 35 mg more vitamin C per day than nonsmokers.
- Infants who are fed evaporated or boiled cow's milk, because cow's milk has very little vitamin C and heat can destroy vitamin C.
- People with certain medical conditions such as severe malabsorption, some types of cancer and kidney disease requiring hemodialysis (medical procedure).



What foods provide vitamin C?

- Citrus fruits (oranges and grapefruit)
- Bell peppers (red, yellow, green)
- Strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, cranberries
- Tomatoes
- Cantaloupe
- Mango
- Papaya
- Broccoli
- Watermelon
- Pineapple
- Winter squash

References:

1. Vitamin C: MedlinePlus Medical Encyclopedia. (n.d.). Retrieved January 21, 2015, from <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/002404.htm>



What happens if I do not get enough?

Vitamin C deficiency is rare in the United States.

- People who get little or no vitamin C (below about 10 mg per day) for many weeks can get scurvy. Scurvy causes general weakness, anemia, gum disease and skin hemorrhages. Older adults who are not getting proper nutrition are most affected by scurvy.

Did You Know?

The word “ascorbic,” as in ascorbic acid (the name for vitamin C), means “no scurvy.”

Stuffed Bell Peppers

Ingredients:

- ½ cup onion, chopped fine
- 1 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 celery stalk, chopped
- 1 cup low sodium vegetable broth
- 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 5 oz. chopped spinach, frozen
- 8 oz. white beans, cooked
- ½ cup fresh tomatoes, chopped
- ½ cup quinoa
- 1 medium carrot grated
- 2 bell peppers, red or yellow
- ¼ tsp. salt

Directions:

1. Sauté onion and celery in oil to translucent. Add garlic. Cook one additional minute.
2. Stir in tomatoes and cook five minutes.
3. Add beans, quinoa, carrot, spinach, salt and 1 cup vegetable stock. Bring to boil, cover, turn down heat and simmer for 20 minutes.
4. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Cut bell peppers in half length wise. Scoop out seeds and veins.
5. Fill each pepper evenly with stuffing mix, cap with a small square of foil. Turn upside down onto a baking dish. Roast for 20 minutes until pepper is just turning soft.
6. Halfway through baking time, add top to baking dish for duration of cooking time. Remove from oven. Invert peppers upright. Serve while still hot and enjoy!



Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1/2 bell pepper (408g)	
Servings Per Container 4	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 270	Calories from Fat 80
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 9g	14%
Saturated Fat 2.5g	13%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 10mg	3%
Sodium 420mg	18%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	12%
Dietary Fiber 7g	28%
Sugars 10g	
Protein 10g	
Vitamin A 110%	• Vitamin C 160%
Calcium 15%	• Iron 15%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Saturated Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4	



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