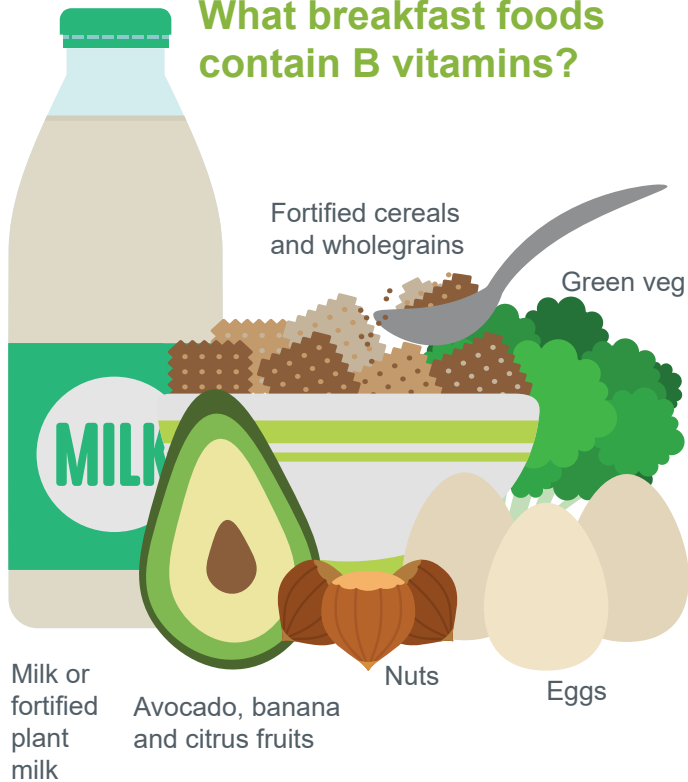


What breakfast foods contain B vitamins?



Why are B vitamins important?

B vitamins are generally needed to keep the nervous system running in tip top condition. Some B vitamins help to release energy from foods. Other B vitamins are needed for healthy blood (B6, folic acid and B12). Folic acid is also known as vitamin B9, and is particularly important in the early stages of pregnancy as it helps to ensure the baby grows healthily.



On average breakfast in the UK provides children with 25-45% of their total daily vitamin B doses”

Gaal et al., 2018

B

Vitamins

Does my breakfast contain B vitamins?

Yes, breakfasts can contain B vitamins depending upon what you eat. Research has shown that people who eat breakfast have higher intakes of B vitamins than those people who skip breakfast. (Coulthard et al, 2017)

Do most people get enough B vitamins?

There are 8 B vitamins with each one having a slightly different role in the body. Around 20% of teenage girls in the UK do not get enough riboflavin (vitamin B2) in their diet (Weichselbaum and Buttriss, 2014). Strict vegans may be deficient in B12, as this is only found naturally in foods of animal origin e.g milk, meat, eggs. A recent study found that around 7% of school children who skipped breakfast did not get enough folic acid (B9) in their diet. (Coulthard et al, 2017)

Test your knowledge with our mini quiz

1. Breakfast cereals are not a good source of B vitamins?
2. The bacteria in your bowel make some B vitamins?
3. A lack of some B vitamins can cause anaemia?
4. Most B vitamins are stored in the body so you do not need them every day?
5. Vitamin B12 is only available from animal products?

Answers

1. **False.** Many breakfast cereals are fortified with B vitamins. If you add fruit, milk or yoghurt to your cereal, you will also boost the vitamin B content. Other breakfast products such as wholemeal bread, eggs, milk, yoghurt, seeds, oats, citrus fruits, avocado, bananas, meat and nuts are sources of B vitamins.
2. **True.** The bacteria in your bowel ferment to make vitamin B6 and B7, and that is a good thing! That is why it is important to eat fibre to help keep the good bacteria growing in your gut.
3. **True.** Folic acid and B12 are both important in making sure that we have healthy blood. A lack of either of these can cause a form of anaemia (where you produce wrongly shaped blood cells that cannot work as efficiently).
4. **False.** B vitamins are generally not stored in the body so we need a constant supply of them every day.
5. **True.** B12 is only found naturally in food products such as milk, cheese, eggs, meat and fish. For vegans, sources of B12 include fortified cereals and plant milks, and yeast extracts such as marmite. In one study, around half the people who were vegan were found to be deficient in B12.