

Vitamin B12 is essential for red blood cell formation, DNA synthesis, nerve function, and energy production. It's mainly found in animal-based foods and is crucial for preventing anemia and supporting brain health.

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## Top 15 Animal-Based Sources of Vitamin B12

| Animal Product           | Vitamin B12 (µg per 100g) |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Beef Liver (Cooked)      | 83.1 µg                   |
| Lamb Liver (Cooked)      | 85.7 µg                   |
| Clams (Cooked)           | 98.9 µg                   |
| Oysters (Cooked)         | 16.0 µg                   |
| Mackerel (Cooked)        | 19.0 µg                   |
| Sardines (Canned in Oil) | 8.9 µg                    |
| Salmon (Cooked)          | 3.2 µg                    |
| Tuna (Cooked)            | 10.9 µg                   |
| Trout (Cooked)           | 7.5 µg                    |
| Herring (Cooked)         | 13.1 µg                   |
| Beef (Cooked, Lean Cuts) | 6.2 µg                    |
| Turkey (Cooked)          | 1.0 µg                    |
| Chicken (Cooked, Breast) | 0.3 µg                    |
| Eggs (Whole, Boiled)     | 1.1 µg                    |

| <b>Animal Product</b>      | <b>Vitamin B12 (µg per 100g)</b> |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Milk (Whole, 1 cup)        | 1.3 µg                           |
| Cheddar Cheese             | 1.1 µg                           |
| Yogurt (Plain, Whole Milk) | 0.5 µg                           |

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## Top Fortified and Plant-Based Sources of Vitamin B12

| <b>Fortified Food/Plant Source</b> | <b>Vitamin B12 (µg per 100g)</b> |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Fortified Nutritional Yeast        | 24.0 µg                          |
| Fortified Breakfast Cereals        | 6.0 µg                           |
| Fortified Plant Milks              | 1.0 – 2.5 µg per cup             |
| Fortified Tofu                     | 2.0 µg                           |
| Fortified Plant-Based Meat         | 1.5 – 3.0 µg                     |
| Tempeh (Fermented Soybeans)        | 0.1 – 0.3 µg                     |
| Nori (Seaweed, Dried)              | 1.2 µg                           |
| Shiitake Mushrooms (Dried)         | 1.1 µg                           |

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## Fruits and Vegetables (Minimal Sources of B12)

- Fruits and vegetables naturally contain little to no B12.
  - Small amounts may be present in fermented foods and seaweed, but not in significant quantities.
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## Recommended Daily Intake (RDI)

- Adults (19+ years): 2.4 µg/day
- Pregnant Women: 2.6 µg/day
- Breastfeeding Women: 2.8 µg/day
- Children (1-8 years): 0.9 – 1.2 µg/day

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## Health Benefits of Vitamin B12

- Prevents Anemia - Supports red blood cell production and prevents megaloblastic anemia.
- Nerve Health - Protects nerve cells and maintains neurological function.
- Boosts Energy - Helps convert food into energy.
- Supports Heart Health - Lowers homocysteine levels, reducing heart disease risk.
- Improves Mood - Plays a role in producing serotonin, aiding in mental health.

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## Signs of Vitamin B12 Deficiency

- Fatigue and Weakness
- Tingling or Numbness in Hands/Feet
- Memory Loss and Confusion
- Pale or Jaundiced Skin
- Shortness of Breath and Dizziness

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## Tips to Maximize Vitamin B12 Intake

1. Prioritize Animal Products - Liver, clams, and fish are the richest sources.
2. Choose Fortified Foods - Opt for cereals, plant milks, and nutritional yeast with added B12.
3. Consider Supplements - Especially for vegans, vegetarians, and older adults.
4. Cook Smart - Vitamin B12 is heat-sensitive; avoid overcooking meats and fish.
5. Get Regular Checkups - Monitor B12 levels, particularly if following a plant-based diet.

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## Did You Know?

- Vitamin B12 is not naturally found in plant foods; vegetarians and vegans are at higher risk of deficiency.

- Fortified nutritional yeast can provide up to 24 µg of B12 per tablespoon!
- Older adults may require B12 supplements due to reduced absorption from food.