

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

Animal Product	Vitamin B12 (µg per 100g)
Milk (Whole, 1 cup)	1.3 µg
Cheddar Cheese	1.1 µg
Yogurt (Plain, Whole Milk)	0.5 µg

Top Fortified and Plant-Based Sources of Vitamin B12

Fortified Food/Plant Source	Vitamin B12 (µg per 100g)
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

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

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.

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

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.