



Working TOWARD Wellness

LIVE BETTER. LIVE LONGER.

PROVIDED BY HEART HEALTH ACTION WINDSOR-ESSEX
AND THE WINDSOR-ESSEX COUNTY HEALTH UNIT

ABC'S OF HEALTHY EATING



Do you know your ABC's when it comes to healthy eating? Are you getting enough ABC nutrients in your diet? These important nutrients include Anti-oxidants, B-vitamins and Calcium (and other bone nutrients). These nutrients benefit our everyday health. As well, they may reduce the risk for developing heart disease, cancer, and other age-related health conditions like osteoporosis and cataracts.

"A" is for Anti-oxidants. There are hundreds of these amazing substances in our food! They help reduce the number of damaging "free radicals" in our body. Examples include vitamin C and beta-carotene.

"B" is for B-vitamins. These nutrients perform many essential everyday functions, like keeping our blood and nervous systems healthy and helping our bodies use energy from food. Some examples include vitamins B1, B2, B3, B12 and folate.

"C" is for Calcium. Calcium-rich foods help to maintain bone mass and bone strength as well as help prevent osteoporosis.

Read on for more information about the ABC's of Healthy Eating.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE! T F

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|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Milk products are a good source of vitamin C and beta-carotene. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. You can't overdose on nutritional supplements. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Folic acid supplements are recommended for a healthy pregnancy. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Figs are a good source of easily absorbed calcium. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Food is your best source for the ABC nutrients. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Anti-oxidants help to reduce "free radicals." | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Milk is a top pick for calcium. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. Citrus fruit is NOT a top pick for anti-oxidants. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. Most people eat enough vegetables and fruit. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. The Dietitians of Canada website is a good website for reliable information on healthy eating. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

see answers on back panel

Practicing Your ABC's Makes Good Sense

SHORT TERM

- Build strong bones
- Renew red blood cells
- Increase iron absorption
- Heal cuts and wounds fast
- More resistance to infections

LONG TERM

- May reduce risk for:
 - Heart disease and cancer
 - Osteoporosis
 - Developing cataracts

OTHER

- Reduce the number of babies who are born with neural tube defects

Why SHOULD I BE CONCERNED ABOUT THESE ABC NUTRIENTS?

These nutrients perform many core functions in our body. Without adequate amounts, our bones, nerves, muscles, blood and immune system would not work properly.

Research suggests that some of these nutrients also help reduce the risk of heart disease, cancer and other conditions such as cataracts. For example, anti-oxidants help to reduce the number of “free radicals” in our body. These “free radicals” damage cells similar to the way that rust attacks metal.

Food is your best source for the ABC nutrients. Food also contains

many more beneficial substances besides the 50 nutrients that we already know to be essential to human life.

Some ABC nutrients like calcium, vitamin D, folate (or folic acid) and vitamin B12 may need to be supplemented for optimum health. Be sure to ask your doctor, pharmacist or a registered dietitian for reliable advice if you are considering taking a supplement of one of these nutrients or some other nutritional product. While most multi-vitamin and mineral supplements will not cause problems, many others should be approached with caution - you can get too much of a good thing.

How CAN YOU MAKE SURE TO GET

GET STARTED

You can get all of the ABC nutrients you need by following Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating.

Aim to eat the recommended number of food servings found in each of the four food groups:

- Grain Products - 5 to 12 servings/day.
- Vegetables and Fruit - 5 to 10 servings/day.
- Milk Products - 3 to 4 servings/day .
- Meat and Alternatives - 2 to 3 servings/day.

Focus on eating more vegetables and fruit every day, especially those that are deeply coloured orange, green and red. Try to eat at least 5 servings a day. This food group is a key source for many of the ABC nutrients.

TAKE STEPS

Whether eating at home, eating out or packing your lunch for work, make sure you include foods everyday that are top picks for the ABC nutrients.

Top Picks for Anti-oxidants

- Citrus fruits & juices like orange, grapefruit, tangerine, etc.
- Kiwi fruit, strawberries, cantaloupe.
- Broccoli, brussels sprouts.
- Red, green & yellow peppers, tomatoes, carrots.
- Winter squash, sweet potato and pumpkin.
- Dark green leafy vegetables.
- Beans and lentils
- Nuts and seeds, including their oils.

Top Picks for B-vitamins

- Whole grain products like whole wheat breads and cereals, whole

grain crackers, bagels and buns, oatmeal and wheat germ.

- Folate, a key B-vitamin, is found in broccoli; oranges & orange juice; brussel sprouts; kidney, navy and soy beans; and nuts and seeds.
- Folate is also found in enriched breads, cereals and pasta.

Top Picks for Calcium and Other Bone Health Nutrients

- Milk, yogurt and low-fat cheese.
- Calcium-fortified beverages like soy, rice and orange juice.
- Canned salmon with bones.
- Tofu packed with a calcium salt.

Calcium is also found in other non-milk products. Some include: broccoli, kale & bok choy, blackstrap molasses, almonds and sesame seeds, figs and white beans. But, the calcium in these

What IS SO HARD ABOUT GETTING ENOUGH ABC'S?

Low intake of vegetables and fruit

Many people do not eat enough vegetables and fruit. This can lead to poor intakes of vitamin C, Beta-carotene, and folate, a key B-vitamin. Most would be surprised to see how little it would take to increase their intake to the right level.

Low intake of milk products

If you don't have at least 3 servings of milk products each day, there is a good chance that you are not getting enough calcium and vitamin D in your diet. Make a point to add more milk products to your diet. Your bones are worth the effort.

ENOUGH OF THESE NUTRIENTS?

foods is not very well absorbed. So, you would need to eat very large amounts of these foods to get enough calcium.

If you are eating calcium-rich foods at every meal, you probably don't need a calcium supplement. But, if you are consuming less than 3 servings/day of milk, yogurt, fortified soy or rice beverages or fortified orange juice, then you should consider taking a calcium supplement with vitamin D.

STICK TO IT

Every time you have a medium sized fruit or vegetable, or a 1/2 cup of fruit or vegetable juice, you are one step closer to getting at least 5 servings a day. So getting your servings of vegetables or fruit may be easier than you think!

The same goes for increasing your intake of milk products. Adding small amounts to what you already consume can help you reach the recommended number of servings. Try to choose the heart healthy low-fat versions more often.

CELEBRATE!

Take time out to feel good about your small successes in improving the way you eat. Invite a friend over for dinner to try out a new recipe that features the ABC nutrients.

Go for it!

RESOURCES

Contact your the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit for reliable information on the ABC's of Healthy Eating and Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating or to speak to a Registered Dietitian. 258-2146 x 3100

Local book stores for the cookbook, "Cook Great Food" by Dietitians of Canada.

WEBSITES

Dietitians of Canada for reliable information on healthy eating including an interactive meal planner, etc. www.dietitians.ca

Vegetable and Fruit Campaign: Are You Getting Enough? www.5to10aday.com

Nutrition Labelling Education Centre www.healthyeatinginstore.com

Osteoporosis Society of Canada www.osteoporosis.ca

WebMD www.webmd.com (click on WebMD Health)

CLIP & KEEP THIS INFO!

HOW TO PUT MORE ABC NUTRIENTS INTO YOUR DIET

- Focus on eating more vegetables and fruit, especially those that are dark green or orange.
- At breakfast, include a small glass of fruit juice or top your cereal with fresh, frozen or canned fruit.
- Don't leave home without them! Grab easy to eat fruit and vegetables like a banana, apple, pear, dried fruit or baby carrots to snack on during your busy day.
- Liven up cooked vegetables with a glaze of lemon juice and honey, a sprinkle of dried herbs like thyme or basil, or add nutmeg or cinnamon to cooked squash or sweet potato.
- Make room in your day for more milk products. Include a yogurt or milk pudding in your lunch. Have a glass of skim or 1% milk with your evening meal.
- If you are planning to have a baby or are in your childbearing years, talk with your doctor about taking a folic acid supplement to reduce the risk of neural tube defects to the baby. Be sure to also include top picks for folate in your diet everyday.

Make it happen at your workplace!

- Bring more vegetables and fruit to work for meals and snacks.
- Add a yogurt or a small serving of low-fat cheese to your lunch.
- Make your own trail mix that includes dried fruit, whole grain cereals, pretzels and a small amount of nuts. Keep it in your locker or desk drawer for those mid-afternoon or mid-shift snack times.
- Discuss with your wellness committee the possibility of having "Lunch & Learn" talks with a registered dietitian.
- Consider offering 100% fruit juice in the vending machines.
- Support co-workers in making healthy choices at meal or snack times and when eating out.
- In the cafeteria, consider offering incentives to encourage employees to eat more vegetables and fruit and low-fat milk products like skim or 1% milk and yogurt.
- Consider starting a "potluck" fruit basket in your work area or department for you and your co-workers. Take turns refilling the basket on a regular basis.

"ABC is not short for ABraCadabra and healthy eating is not about taking a magic pill."

Unknown

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Answers (from front page): 1-F • 2-F • 3-T • 4-F • 5-T • 6-T • 7-T • 8-F • 9-F • 10-T

For more information about the Workplace Health Promotion Program, contact the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit at 258-2146 x 3100



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