



the
VEGAN RESET

**WEEK ONE: NUTRITION
DAY FIVE:
DEFICIENCIES & SUPPLEMENTS
PT.2 IRON, CALCIUM, D & B12**

DEFICIENCIES & SUPPLEMENTS

B -12

B-12 is an extremely important and crucial nutrient, but what exactly is B-12?

B-12 is one of the B vitamins that is only made by bacteria and is crucial in brain and nervous system health. As it pertains to humans, in a healthy gut, we would have this bacteria in our intestines making B-12 and wouldn't have to acquire it from outside sources. However, with every round of antibiotics we are on, and every time we have ever eaten meat or dairy products (as 80% of antibiotics in the United States are distributed to animal agriculture), it kills our gut bacteria, to the point where most of us no longer contain the bacteria that produces B-12. Further, because of over usage of pesticides and fungicides on our crops, the bacteria from our dirt has been killed off, making it more difficult to get from our plant food.

Contrary to mass understanding, B-12 deficiency is not just a vegan/vegetarian problem. 60% of all B-12 deficient individuals have omnivorous diets. B-12 levels should be checked any time you get a blood profile test.

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Trace amounts of B-12 can be acquired from consuming animal products because the bacteria in their guts may be making it, but in this modern world, that is no longer a guarantee. What is imperative is that we all get our B-12 levels checked and if, and only if we are low in B-12, should we supplement.

If you have healthy levels of B-12 and you are now concerned about your levels if you are/were to go vegan, don't be.

Here's what you can do: Get your levels checked once a year (more is not necessary for healthy individuals). If levels drop due to diet change, the levels are so miniscule that it could take up to 5 years for a drop to occur. (The amount of B-12 we actually need, though very important, is very very small.)

The conclusion: Get your levels checked. If they are in normal range, let it be. If they are below adequate, please pick up a supplement. Sub-lingual cobalamin is the kind we would recommend.

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Calcium (Ca)

Calcium is an abundant mineral of the plant kingdom.

Calcium blood levels will rise on a diet centered around whole plant food! Calcium is found richly in all green vegetables and in lower amounts in grains, seeds and legumes.

The World Health Organization recommends a daily intake of calcium around 400 - 500 mg. The United States says up to 1,000 mg. One published study determined that 540 mg seems to be sufficient, yet still recommends up to 800 mg just to be sure.

If you have low calcium levels, eat more greens such as Salads, Lettuce, Kale, Collards, Broccoli etc. In terms of supplementation, it's the less helpful of the two. Calcium supplements tend to spike blood calcium levels but not necessarily assimilating into our cells. Also, calcium supplements help coagulate and clot blood, so the best supplementation is food.

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Iron (Fe)

Many people, especially women, are anemic. Oddly enough, those that go vegetarian and vegan can naturally normalize their iron levels.

The iron in flesh is called Heme-iron. The iron in plant matter is called non-heme. Heme-iron is more absorbable except if non-heme iron is combined with Vitamin C. That combination makes non-heme iron up to 3 X more absorbable than Heme-iron.

How do we put this in practice?

Iron is abundant in plant matter, but appears greatly in Green Leafy Vegetables like Spinach, Collards, Kale, Swiss Chard, and also Broccoli. In order to make the non-heme iron more absorbable, you can spritz lemon, lime or orange over a salad, or spritz lemon over sauteed or roasted asparagus/broccoli/brussel sprouts. Use salad dressing that has citrus added to them. Combine roasted green veggies with white potatoes (white potatoes are higher in Vitamin C than Oranges per calorie). Slice strawberries over the salad, or have tomatoes or tomato products with Black beans.

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Here are some iron estimates:

100 grams of Morel mushrooms contains ~ 68% of iron requirements

100 grams of baked potato contain ~ 39% of iron recommendations

100 grams of lentils contain ~ 18% of iron recommendations

100 grams of chickpeas contain ~ 16% of iron recommendations

100 grams of pumpkin seeds contain ~ 49% of iron requirements

100 grams of sesame seeds contain ~ 82% of iron recommendations

1 cup of packed spinach contains ~ 80% of iron recommendations

1 cup of cooked Black Beans contains ~ 50% of iron requirements

Iron supplements have a variety of adverse effects, such as constipation, headaches and at worse, liver toxicity, so the absolute best way to obtain your daily amount of iron is through a nutrient rich whole-foods plant-based diet =)