



## News You Can Use

Nutrition Education  
with Seniors

July 2021

### 5 Quick-Facts for Vitamin B12

The 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans state that Vitamin B12 is a nutrient that those ages 60 years and older are not eating enough. Here are some quick facts about the essential Vitamin B12!



**1. Vitamin B12 is found in meat, poultry, seafood, dairy products, and eggs.**

Vitamin B12 is naturally in many animal products. If you don't eat meat or animal products, you can get B12 from fortified foods or a vitamin supplement.

**2. Adults over the age of 50 years should get 2.4mcg of B12, daily.**

Luckily, only 1-2 ounces of meat is all it takes to meet the recommendation!

**3. Too much B12 doesn't harm you!**

In fact, taking an antacid may lower the amount of intrinsic factor in your stomach acid. Intrinsic factor (IF) is necessary for B12 absorption, so lower IF leads to less B12 being absorbed into your body.

**4. B12 is important for keeping your blood cells healthy.**

Eating the recommended amount of Vitamin B12 everyday can help you avoid a type of anemia called *megaloblastic anemia* which makes people feel tired and weak.

**5. Vitamin B12 deficiency can affect your memory and balance.**

Symptoms of B12 deficiency include depression, confusion, dementia, poor memory, and balance issues.



### Canned Tuna

An affordable source of protein!

#### Selection:

- Choose cans without obvious damage; this could mean the **tuna** is unsafe to eat.
- Check the "Best by" or "Best if used by" date on the container.
- Look for the terms "in water" or "low-sodium" on the label.

#### Storage:

- Store **canned tuna** in a cool, clean, and dry place before opening.
- Once opened, place **tuna** in an airtight container and store in refrigerator for up to 3 to 4 days.

#### Nutrition:

- 3 ounces of **canned tuna**, drained
- Provides 100 calories and 22 grams of protein.
- Counts as 3-ounce equivalent of protein on MyPlate.

#### Uses:

- Add to a tossed salad for extra protein, healthy fats, and vitamin B12.
- Add a little mayonnaise to make tuna salad and enjoy on whole grain bread.
- Use for a tuna noodle casserole

## Freezer Tips!

Packing a standard freezer can feel like a Tetris game at times. To keep your food safe, it's best not to overfill your freezer. Use these freezer storage tips to make the most of your space!



1. **Repackage-** Transfer food to a freezer bag and flatten into sheets. This works great for meat.
2. **Label-** Write on the package what is in it and date the day it was bought. Make a list outside your freezer to help you know what you have on hand or what should be used soon.
3. **First In, First Out-** Organize your foods in a way that allows you to grab the older food first instead of the foods you've recently put in the freezer.
4. **Baskets-** To help you from digging in a deep freezer, place your food items in vented storage baskets to help you stay organized!

Adapted from: <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/are-you-storing-food-safely>

## Apple Tuna Sandwiches

Serves: 3 | Serving Size: 1 sandwich

### INGREDIENTS

1 can (6.5 ounces) tuna, packed in water, drained  
1 apple  
1/4 cup low-fat vanilla yogurt  
1 tsp mustard  
1 tsp honey  
6 slices whole wheat bread  
3 leaves lettuce

### INSTRUCTIONS AND TIPS

1. Wash and peel apple. Chop into small pieces
2. Drain the water from the can of tuna
3. Put tuna, apple, yogurt, mustard, and honey in a medium bowl; stir well.
4. Spread 1/2 cup of the tuna mixture onto 1 slice of bread.
5. Top with a washed lettuce leaf and slice of bread

This picnic-friendly meal counts as 1/2 cups of fruit, 2 ounces of grains, and 2 ounces of protein!

### Storage

Store tuna mixture in an airtight container in refrigerator for 3-4 days. Keep your bread in an airtight container or in the bread bag, in a cool, dry place through the "Best by" date.

Nutritional analysis (1 sandwich): 239 calories, 3g fat, 1g saturated, 426mg sodium, 35g carbohydrates, 5g fiber, 12g sugar, 19g protein.

This recipe is adapted from <https://www.myplate.gov/recipes/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/apple-tuna-sandwiches>

## Medications and B12 Absorption

Studies have shown that taking **antacids** daily for more than two years can reduce Vitamin B12 absorption since it needs stomach acid for absorption.

**Metformin**, commonly used to manage Type 2 diabetes, may also lower B12 absorption.

Check with your health care provider if you think you may be at risk for B12 deficiency due to medications.

Adapted from:

<https://doi.org/10.1093/advances/nmy023>

### Helpful Resources

#### Nutrition, Food Preparation and Food Safety Information

ISU AnswerLine  
1-800-262-3804

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