LIVE EAT PLAY Colorado

Vitamin C

Did You Know?

Studies show that vitamin C supplements do not reduce your risk of getting a cold, although regularly taking vitamin C supplements may shorten colds and lead to milder symptoms.

To avoid harmful effects of too much vitamin C, make sure to stay **under** these limits:

Children 1-3	400 mg
Children 4-8	650 mg
Children 9-13	1,200 mg
Teens 14-18	1,800 mg
Adults	2,000 mg

http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/graphics/photos/k3644-12.html

Vitamin C is a water-soluble vitamin and an antioxidant which helps make connective tissues that hold muscles, bones, and other bodily tissues together. Vitamin C is needed for wound healing, bone and teeth formation, iron absorption, and proper immune system functioning. Since it is a water-soluble vitamin, it cannot be stored in the body and needs to be consumed daily.

How much do I need?

- 90 milligrams per day for adult men
- 75 milligrams per day for adult women
- For recommendations for infants, children, and teens, check out the chart in CSU Extension's Fact Sheet: Water-Soluble Vitamins: B-Complex and Vitamin C.

Food sources

Citrus fruits such as oranges, lemons, limes, and grapefruit as well as their juices are great sources of vitamin C. Besides citrus fruits, vitamin C can be found in kiwifruit, red and green bell peppers, broccoli, strawberries, baked potatoes, and tomatoes. One orange or 1/3 cup of chopped sweet red pepper gives enough vitamin C to fulfill the body's needs for one day.

What happens if I don't get enough?

Although rare in the United States, cases of vitamin C deficiency can result in scurvy, loss of teeth, bleeding and swollen gums, or delayed wound healing. Since vitamin C aids in the absorption of iron, inadequate amounts of vitamin C in the diet can lead to iron deficiencies as well, also known as a secondary deficiency. Vitamin C as a secondary deficiency is most common among the elderly and individuals who smoke or abuse alcohol.

Can I get too much?

As a water-soluble vitamin, our bodies are able to excrete most of the excess through our urine. However, overdoses are possible and can lead to kidney stones, diarrhea, and gout.