Vitamins and Minerals to Get Through Natural Sources

Eating healthy isn't just about eating the right foods and eliminating junk. It's also about making sure your body is getting what it needs to function properly. A deficiency of vitamins and minerals could cause health problems sooner rather than later, but that doesn't mean you have to stock up on manufactured vitamins. Below are a few natural food sources that provide great sources of essential vitamins and minerals.

**Vitamin A**

This vitamin is important because it boosts the immune system and promotes healthy vision. The best source of vitamin A is sweet potatoes. Just a single sweet potato contains 561% of the daily recommended allowance. Vitamin A can also be found in spinach, eggs, milk, beef liver, fish, and carrots.

**Vitamin B6**

This is a powerful vitamin. It works to help metabolize the foods we eat and works to help the body control blood sugar. Additionally, it aids in the production of hemoglobin, which is one component of red blood cells, and it contributes to strengthening the immune system. Vitamin B6 can be found in fish. It's also present in fish and beef liver. The food sources with the highest content of B6 are chickpeas and garbanzo beans. A cup of canned chickpeas contains 56% of the recommended daily allotment.

**Folate**

This is an important B vitamin that helps the body form new tissue and proteins. It's especially beneficial to pregnant women, because it works to reduce the risks of birth defects in the baby. The best sources of folate are beef liver and spinach. One half cup of boiled spinach contains 53% of the daily value. Other sources of folate include green, leafy vegetables, nuts, dairy products, and fruits.

**Iron**

The body uses iron, which is found in the hemoglobin in the red blood cells, to supply oxygen to the body. Through this process, iron encourages healthy cell growth. There are two types of iron needed by the body. Iron is found in red meat, fish, and poultry, while lentils and beans are great sources of nonheme iron.

**Vitamin K**

This vitamin works to control bleeding and is what helps the body form blood clots. A deficiency of vitamin K means cuts won't stop bleeding or may take longer than usual to clot. Also known as phylloquinone, vitamin K can be found in abundance in dark, leafy green vegetables. The food containing the highest content of vitamin K is kale, which contains 1.1 mg in a single cup.

While these are just a few natural sources of highly needed vitamins and minerals, there are many more and most can be found abundantly in natural foods. The best way to take advantage of nature's vitamin supply is to eat a wide variety of plant-based foods, nuts, and whole grains.