

# From A to Z in a single egg



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## The vitamins and nutrients that you'll find in this inexpensive and humble kitchen staple

Not only are eggs delicious, they're also an impressive source of the vitamins and nutrients the body needs in order to function. Accredited Practising Dietitian Sharon Natoli recommends that to get maximum nutritional value, whole eggs should be your go to.

"Eggs include vitamins A, B2, B5, B12, D, and E along with minerals such as iron, selenium and iodine and other important nutrients including choline and protein. These nutrients, among others, are spread out in the yolk and the white so to make sure you get all the goodness, enjoy the whole egg. While the egg whites include most of the protein and vitamin B2, vitamins A, B12, D, E, and choline are found exclusively in the yolk. This bundle of nutrients helps to maintain healthy skin, while also supporting the immune system, bone and muscle function, energy levels, metabolism, heart health and others," says Sharon.

## For the full list of vitamins and nutrients that you'll find in an egg:

### Vitamin A

Vitamin A is important for maintaining healthy skin, a functioning immune system, and eye health. A deficiency in vitamin A can cause hair loss, skin problems, dry eyes and an increased risk of infections.

### Riboflavin (Vitamin B2)

Riboflavin, also known as vitamin B2, is important for growth, energy metabolism, red blood cell development, vision, and the healthy functioning of the nervous system. It is also an antioxidant nutrient that the human body is unable to store, which makes it important to consume the recommended daily intake.

### Pantothenic Acid (Vitamin B5)

Pantothenic acid, commonly called vitamin B5, plays a role in converting food into energy and breaking down fat. It also helps in the production of vitamin D. Though uncommon, a deficiency in vitamin B5 can result in fatigue, irritability, numbness, and muscle cramps, among other symptoms.

### Vitamin B12

Vitamin B12 is essential in the formation of red blood cells, converting food into energy, and maintaining the healthy function of the immune and nervous systems. The human body is incapable of making vitamin B12 on its own, making it essential to consume foods high in this vitamin.

### Choline

Choline is a little-known yet important nutrient that plays a role in liver and nerve function, as well as brain development and function. Choline is essential in prenatal health for both mother and baby, as well as all stages through adulthood. The human body can produce choline but not in the amounts needed daily by the body. 90% of Australians do not meet the adequate intake level of choline, which can be easily corrected by including eggs regularly in our daily diets<sup>1</sup>.

### Vitamin D

Vitamin D has an important role in calcium and phosphorus absorption, making it essential for the maintenance of healthy bones and teeth. It also contributes to healthy muscle function and immune system maintenance. Egg yolks are one of the few foods that naturally contain vitamin D.

### Vitamin E

Vitamin E has beneficial antioxidant properties that play a role in maintaining good health. It may be important for heart health, with studies linking it to lower rates of heart disease. Studies have also found links between vitamin E and immune function, a reduction in age-related eye disorders, and slowing cognitive decline associated with aging.

### Folate

Folate is an important nutrient for everyone to contribute to healthy red blood cells formation and in particular for pregnant women, helping to produce and maintain new cells and protect against serious birth defects, such as spina bifida.

## **Iodine**

This essential mineral is required for your thyroid to produce hormones that regulate the body's metabolic rate, as well as assist with cognitive function and brain development, and maintaining healthy skin.

## **Iron**

Iron is an important mineral that produces haemoglobin, which in turn carries oxygen to tissues in your body. Iron is also essential in helping muscles store and use oxygen. Despite its importance, an estimated one in eight Australians is iron deficient making it one of the most common nutrient deficiencies in the world.

## **Phosphorus**

Phosphorus is essential for the development and maintenance of healthy bones and teeth, as well as cell membranes. It also contributes to energy metabolism and muscle growth. Low levels of phosphorus can result in a loss of appetite or bone pain.

## **Selenium**

Although only required in trace amounts compared to other vitamins and minerals, selenium is an important antioxidant that helps prevent free radical damage to cells in the body. Selenium supports the immune system, thyroid gland function, and the maintenance of healthy hair and nails.

ENDS

Reference:

1. Probst, Y, et. al. Development of a Choline Database to Estimate Australian Population Intakes. *Nutrients* 2019, **11**, 913.