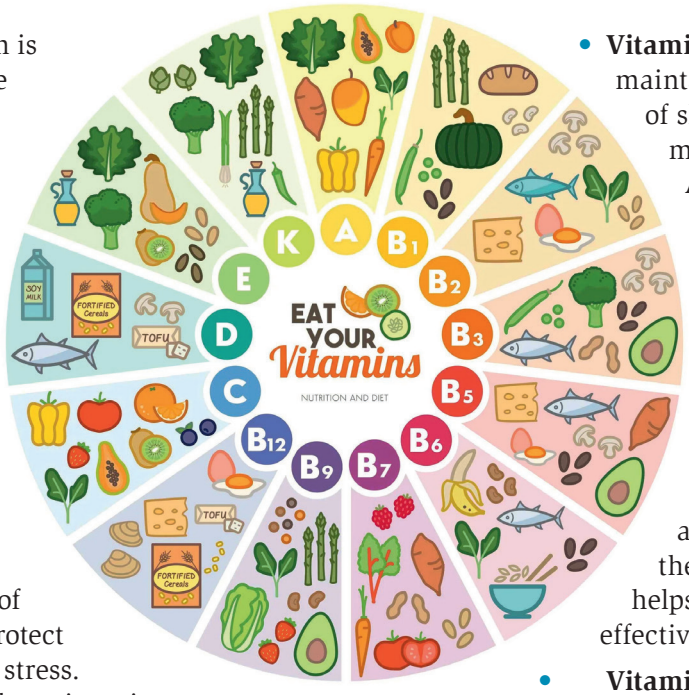
What vitamins for the immune system?

A strong immune system is crucial for protecting the body against infections, viruses, and other diseases. While lifestyle factors such as sleep, exercise, and stress management are important, specific vitamins play a central role in maintaining immune health. These vitamins help regulate immune responses, support the production and activity of white blood cells, and protect the body from oxidative stress. Including these essential nutrients in your daily diet can significantly strengthen your body's defences.



Key vitamins for immune health

- **Vitamin C** is widely known for its immune-boosting properties. It stimulates the production of white blood cells, which are essential for fighting infections. Additionally, vitamin C is a potent antioxidant, protecting immune cells from damage caused by free radicals. Foods rich in vitamin C include citrus fruits, kiwi, strawberries, bell peppers, broccoli, and Brussels sprouts. Regular consumption may also reduce the duration and severity of colds.
- **Vitamin D** plays a regulatory role in both innate and adaptive immunity. It enhances the pathogen-fighting abilities of immune cells such as T-cells and macrophages. Deficiency in vitamin D has been linked to increased susceptibility to infections. The body produces vitamin D when exposed to sunlight, and it can also be obtained from fatty fish, fortified dairy products, and eggs.
- **Vitamin A.** Essential for maintaining the integrity of skin and mucous membranes, vitamin A acts as a first-line barrier against pathogens. It also supports the function of T-cells, which are critical in adaptive immunity. Vitamin A is found in foods such as carrots, sweet potatoes, spinach, kale, and liver. Consuming these foods regularly helps the body maintain effective immune surveillance.
- **Vitamin E.** Acting primarily as an antioxidant, vitamin E protects immune cells from oxidative stress that can impair their function. It also enhances the communication between different immune cells, improving overall immune efficiency. Sources of vitamin E include almonds, sunflower seeds, hazelnuts, and vegetable oils like sunflower or safflower oil.
- **Vitamin B6 and B12**. Vitamin B6 is necessary for the production of antibodies and the proper function of immune cells. Foods rich in B6 include poultry, bananas, potatoes, and fortified cereals. Vitamin B12 supports red blood cell formation and the health of the nervous system, indirectly influencing immunity. It is found in meat, fish, dairy products, and fortified plant-based foods.

bell pepper: *peperone*
to boost: *aumentare, potenziare*
citrus: *agrumi*
kale: *cavolo*

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1 Answer the questions.

1. What is the main role of vitamins in the immune system?
2. How does vitamin C support immunity?
3. What are some food sources of vitamin C?
4. How does vitamin D influence the immune system?
5. Why is vitamin A important for immunity?
6. Which foods are rich in vitamin E, and what does it do for immunity?
7. What is the role of vitamin B6 in the immune system?
8. How does vitamin B12 support immune health?

2 Fill in the gaps with the missing words. There are two words you won't need.

pattern • bone • supplements • osteoporosis • nutrients • sugar • protects • diet • fermented • arteries • exposure • foods

Why Take Vitamin D3 with K2?

Vitamin D3, also called cholecalciferol, is a **1.** ..... that helps your body absorb calcium. You can get it through eating foods such as fish, eggs, and cheese or through **2.** ..... to sunlight. Vitamin D3 has many functions for your body, including **3.** ..... growth, bone remodelling, regulating muscle contractions, and converting food into energy.

Vitamin K2 plays a vital role in many functions of your body, including blood clotting. It also **4.** ..... the health of your heart and keeps your bones strong. You can find vitamin K2 in some animal foods and **5.** ..... foods.

Deficiencies in these vitamins are widespread, and it can be tough to get enough of both of these vital nutrients in your **6.** ....., especially since vitamin K2 isn't found in commonly eaten **7.** ..... Because of this, it's usually necessary to take **8.** ..... of both of these, and these vitamins work best when you take both of them together.

While vitamin D3 helps your body absorb more calcium, vitamin K2 helps your body transport it to your bones and teeth rather than letting it sit in your **9.** ..... and other soft tissues in your body. This not only helps to promote bone health, but it also helps to keep your heart healthy as well. By strengthening your bones, you can lower your risk of **10.** ....., and by keeping your heart healthy, you can lower your risk of heart disease.

Adapted from: *https://www.cloverinternalmedicine.com/blog/why-everyone-needs-to-take-vitamin-d3-with-k2*

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