FIT FOR PERFORMANCE
WEIGHT LOSS STRATEGIES

Food Alternatives to Dietary Supplement Use

Dietary supplements are an insufficient substitute for a well-balanced diet. Many of the nutrients found in food work together to provide health benefits (such as the Vitamin D and calcium that is found in dairy foods). Eating whole foods provides the body with vitamins, minerals, energy, and health promoting plant compounds such as antioxidants. For information on dietary supplements, visit Operation Supplement Safety at https://www.opss.org/

Supplement / Function:	Example of Food Sources (By Food Group):
Antioxidants: Promotes health benefits such as decreasing the risk of developing cancer and chronic disease	Vegetables/Fruits: Artichokes, kale, sweet potato, carrots, avocado, papaya, blackberries, blueberries, raspberries, cranberries, cherries, pears Herbs: Cloves, cinnamon, turmeric, ginger, oregano
Vitamin A: Helps maintain vision, immune function, and reproductive health	Vegetables/Fruits: Spinach, carrots, sweet potato, mango, cantaloupe, peach, watermelon Protein: Beef liver, chicken liver Grain: Bran, oatmeal
Vitamin C: Helps the body to absorb the mineral iron and important for wound healing and immune function	Vegetables/Fruits: Cabbage, broccoli, strawberries, pineapple, blueberries, tomatoes and citrus fruit such as oranges, lemons, and tangerines,
Vitamin D: Helps the body absorb calcium for healthy teeth and bones	Meat/Fish: Salmon, sardines, herring, mackerel Dairy: Non-fat or skim, 1%, 2% milk
Vitamin E: Helps the body produce red blood cells	Vegetables: Spinach, broccoli Protein (nuts/seeds): Sunflower seeds, almonds, hazelnuts Fats (oils): Wheat germ oil, corn oil, sunflower oil
Vitamin K: Promotes blood clotting and bone health	Vegetables/Fruits: Leafy green lettuce, spinach, cabbage, broccoli, kale, Swiss chard, strawberries Protein: Beef liver, chicken liver
Calcium: Important for bone structure, nerve function, and muscle contractions	Vegetables: Spinach, kale Protein: Sardines, salmon, tofu Dairy: Non-fat or low-fat yogurt, milk (skim, 1%, 2%), cheese (Swiss, cheddar, colby, mozzarella)
Iron: Helps red blood cells carry oxygen throughout the body and helps muscles store and use oxygen	Fruits: Raisins Grains: Ready to eat fortified whole grain cereal, oatmeal Protein: Tofu, cashews, pistachios, soybeans, lima beans, chickpeas, kidney beans
Zinc: Important for the function of the immune system, wound healing, and the breakdown of carbohydrates	Protein: Oysters, lean cuts of poultry and beef Grain: Ready to eat fortified whole grain cereal
Thiamin (B1): Helps the body change carbohydrates into energy	Protein: Lean cuts of pork and turkey, salmon, black or navy beans Grains: Whole wheat (bread, pasta), ready to eat fortified whole grain cereal, hominy, oatmeal
Riboflavin (B2): Important for the production of red blood cells	Protein: Beef liver, lean cuts of lamb Grains: Bran, oatmeal, fortified whole grain cereal
Niacin (B3): Helps the body maintain healthy skin and nerves	Protein: Lean cuts of poultry, beef, pork, salmon, halibut, tuna (canned) Grains: Fortified whole grain cereal, barley, oatmeal
B6: Helps maintain brain function	Vegetable: Potato Protein: Lean cuts of poultry, beef liver, halibut Grains: Brown rice
Pantothenic Acid (B5): Important for the metabolism of food and the production of hormones	Vegetables/Fruits: Broccoli, kale, cabbage, sweet potato, avocado Protein: Lean cuts of poultry Grains: Fortified whole grain cereal
Cobalamin (B12): Helps produce red blood cells and maintains the central nervous system	Protein: Beef liver salmon, lean cuts of poultry, beef, pork Grains: Fortified whole grain cereal Dairy: Non-fat/low-fat yogurt, cottage cheese, Swiss cheese
Folate (B9): Necessary for the production of DNA and works with vitamin B12 to produce red blood cells	Protein: Chicken liver, black eyed peas, black beans, pinto beans Vegetables/Fruits: Spinach, asparagus, collards, oranges, tomatoes Grains: Whole grain (bread/pasta), fortified whole grain cereal