

- Vitamins

Common Signs of Vitamin Deficiencies

The Freeman · 17 Jul 2023 · 10 · By: Yasunari Ramon Suarez Taguchi

Throughout history, societies have known that consuming certain foodstuffs is essential to stay healthy. However, it was only in the late 1800s and early 1900s when scientists were able to identify and isolate vitamins as the reason why certain vitamin-rich food sources helps in warding off certain diseases and afflictions.

The discovery of vitamins, in turn, led to what's now known as a roster of vitamin deficiencies. Here are takes on some of the most common signs of vitamin deficiencies – signs which may be your body's way of telling you of something that you shouldn't ignore.

Vitamin A

Widely identified as a vitamin that's essential for healthy eyesight, a common indicator of vitamin A deficiency is a condition called nyctalopia or "night blindness". Signs of vitamin A deficiency is also linked with thyroid dysfunction and a skin condition called phrynoderma.

Apart from being notorious for helping maintain good vision, vitamin A helps keep teeth, skin and bones healthy. Food stuff like eggs, fish, sweet potatoes, carrots, pumpkin/squash and spinach are rich in vitamin A.

Vitamin B2

Identified as an antioxidant, common signs of vitamin B2 deficiency includes swelling and/or redness of the linings in one's throat and mouth. Sore throat, mouth sores and cracks at the corners of one's mouth is also one of the deficiency's symptoms. Also known as ribo flavin, vitamin B2 helps maintain healthy hair, skin and blood. Like vitamin B1, it also helps the body convert food into energy. Leafy veggies, dairy products and meat are rich in vitamin B2.

Vitamin B1

Also known as thiamin, common signs of vitamin B1 deficiency includes fatigue, nausea and abdominal discomfort. Trouble digesting carbohydrates is also associated with vitamin B1 deficiency, which is generally cited by healthcare experts as a possible precursor to a condition called beriberi. Vitamin B1 helps the body convert food into energy. Studies show that it also helps maintain healthy nerve functions. Tomatoes, watermelon, pork and spinach are rich sources of this vitamin.

Vitamin B3

Vomiting and canker sores are attributed to be common signs of vitamin B3 deficiency. A condition called pellagra, which identifies scaly or cracked skin as symptoms, is cited by healthcare experts as one which results from severe vitamin B3 deficiency. Also known as niacin, vitamin B3 helps maintain health nerve functions and convert food into energy. Beef, chicken, peanuts and shrimp are rich in this vitamin.

Vitamin C

Healthcare experts note that cases of severe vitamin C deficiency are rare. What's common are cases of low vitamin C levels. Deficiency symptoms include scaly skin, dry hair and gingivitis. Severe vitamin C deficiency cases can lead to a disease called scurvy.

Vitamin C, also known as ascorbic acid, is notorious for helping boost the body's immune system by acting as an antioxidant. Citrus fruits and veggies like pepper, tomato, spinach and broccoli are rich in vitamin C.

Vitamin B6

Healthcare experts note that vitamin B6 deficiency is rare, but mild cases of it largely affects children and the elderly. Muscle weakness, irritability, difficulty concentrating and short-term memory loss are listed as symptoms of severe cases of vitamin B6 deficiency.

Vitamin B6 helps in the production of red blood cells. Studies also note that it has benefits related to healthy sleeping habits, appetites and moods. Also known as pyridoxine, foodstuffs like legumes, fish and chicken are rich in vitamin B6.

Vitamin D

Considered to be one of the most common types of vitamin deficiencies, signs of vitamin D deficiency include fatigue, bone pain, muscle pains and cramps. Mood changes are also tied with vitamin D deficiency.

Vitamin D helps in maintaining healthy teeth and bones. Pre-noontime sunlight, eggs and fatty fish are rich sources of vitamin D.

Vitamin E

Muscle mass loss, muscle weakness and improper balance are attributed as common signs of vitamin E deficiency. Liver and kidney problems are known to be tied with long term deficiencies of this vitamin.

Vitamin E acts like an antioxidant which allows it to help stabilize cell membranes in the body. Whole grains, nuts and fruits like avocado are rich in this vitamin.

Vitamin K

Identified as a vitamin that helps in blood coagulation/ clotting in the healing of wounds, excessive bleeding is identified as a common sign of vitamin K deficiency. Cases of severe vitamin K deficiency, though, are rare.

Apart from helping in blood clotting, vitamin K helps the body regulate blood calcium levels. Leavy greens and broccoli are rich sources of vitamin K.