

Food Sources:

Vitamin C

Vitamin C, or ascorbic acid, is a water-soluble nutrient required for protein metabolism, immune function, wound healing, gene expression, and collagen production.¹ Vitamin C is also an important antioxidant and participates in many chemical reactions in the body.²

Fruits and vegetables contain the most vitamin C of all food sources. Some fortified foods may also contain vitamin C, as well as, supplements. Since vitamin C is heat sensitive, eating fruits and vegetables either raw, or lightly steamed is recommended. Vitamin C deficiency is rare as long as fruits and vegetables are included in the diet. Individuals who smoke or eat few fruits and vegetables may be at an increased risk for vitamin C insufficiency.

The Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDAs) for vitamin C are as follows:

- **Females, ages 19+:** 75 milligrams (mg) per day
- **Males, ages 19+:** 90 mg per day
- **Pregnancy, ages 19+:** 85 mg per day
- **Lactating, ages 19+:** 120 mg per day

**Those who smoke require 35 mg more vitamin C per day compared to nonsmokers.*

Food, standard serving size	Average Vitamin C Content (in milligrams)
Red sweet pepper, ½ cup raw	95
Strawberries, 1 cup	85
Orange, 1 medium	70
Kiwi, 1 medium	65
Sweet green pepper, ½ cup raw	60
Broccoli, ½ cup raw	50
Brussels sprouts, ½ cup cooked	45
Grapefruit, ½ medium raw	44
Tomato juice, ¾ cup	33
Cantaloupe, ½ cup	30
Cabbage, ½ cup cooked	28
Cauliflower, ½ cup raw	26

REFERENCES

1. Oregon State University, Linus Pauling Institute. Micronutrient Information Center. Vitamin C. <https://lpi.oregonstate.edu/mic/vitamins/vitamin-C>. Updated December 2018. Accessed March 20, 2020.
2. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, Office of Dietary Supplements. Vitamin C. <https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/VitaminC-HealthProfessional/>. Updated February 2020. Accessed March 20, 2020.
3. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service. FoodData Central. fdc.nal.usda.gov. Accessed March 23, 2020.

