

Covenant Cardiology Elements of Good Health

Check your pantry, refrigerator and freezer – do they contain ingredients for good health? Your body needs various nutrients and minerals to function properly. Make sure to include foods that contain the elements listed below in your diet.*

| THE ELEMENTS OF GOOD HEALTH | WHY YOUR BODY NEEDS IT | FOODS THAT CONTAIN IT | ADDITIONAL INFORMATION |
|--|---|---|--|
|  <p>CALCIUM</p> | <p>Calcium strengthens bones and teeth. It also helps muscles and blood vessels expand and contract.</p> | <p>Dairy products and green, leafy vegetables (such as broccoli and kale).</p> | <p>Talk to your doctor about the medications you are taking. Some medications and supplements can cause the body to absorb less calcium than what is normal and needed.</p> |
|  <p>FIBER</p> | <p>Fiber is important for your digestive system. It can help prevent constipation, diabetes and heart disease. Studies also indicate it can help reduce your risk for colon cancer.</p> | <p>Cereals, whole grains, beans, fruits and vegetables.</p> | <p>If there is not much fiber in your diet, add high-fiber foods gradually to avoid abdominal discomfort.</p> |
|  <p>IRON</p> | <p>Iron is essential to human life. It is found in hemoglobin (red blood cells), which transports oxygen throughout your entire body; and myoglobin (muscle cells), which stores and releases oxygen as your muscles need it.</p> | <p>Lean meats, poultry, tuna, beans, lentils, spinach, fortified cereals and oatmeal.</p> | <p>Low iron levels can lead to anemia and fatigue – high levels can be dangerous. Talk to your doctor to find out the amount that is right for you.</p> |
|  <p>OMEGA-3</p> | <p>Omega -3 fatty acids benefit your entire body. They protect your heart by lowering cholesterol and blood pressure as well as helping to reduce the risk of stroke, diabetes, asthma, mental decline and some cancers.</p> | <p>Cold-water fish (such as tuna, salmon and mackerel), green, leafy vegetables, flax seed oil and some vegetable oils.</p> | <p>If you are concerned about mercury, the American Heart Association states that for the average adult, the benefits of omega-3s far outweighs the risk of potential mercury consumption.</p> |
|  <p>PROTEIN</p> | <p>Every cell in your body needs protein to function. It helps build and maintain bones, muscles and skin.</p> | <p>Lean meat, pork, poultry, fish, dairy products, eggs, nuts and soy products.</p> | <p>It is important to eat protein-rich foods every day because, unlike fats and carbohydrates, the body cannot and does not store protein.</p> |

* The optimal daily amount of each element varies per individual (based on gender, age, weight, etc.). Talk to your doctor to learn the amounts that are best for you.

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