

# Vitamin A

## Why do we need Vitamin A in our diets?

Vitamin A, which is also called retinol, is a fat-soluble vitamin important for the maintenance of our immune system, eye health and vision, and for normal growth and development.

## How much vitamin A do you need?<sup>1</sup>

Stage of life	Recommended daily intake (micrograms)	
0-12 months	350	
1-6 years	400	
7-10 years	500	
11-14 years	600	
15-18 years	Male 700	Female 600
Adults	Male 700	Female 600
Pregnancy	700	
Breastfeeding	950	

## Where do vegans get Vitamin A?

Our bodies turn carotenoids found in plant-based foods, including beta carotene, into Vitamin A. Carotenoids are found in yellow fruits and in leafy green or orange vegetables.

Vegan diets should include a reliable source of carotenoids daily, such as (orange) sweet potato, butternut squash, carrot or spinach. Dried apricots, kale, red peppers, cantaloupe melon, mango and spring greens also provide good amounts of carotenoids.

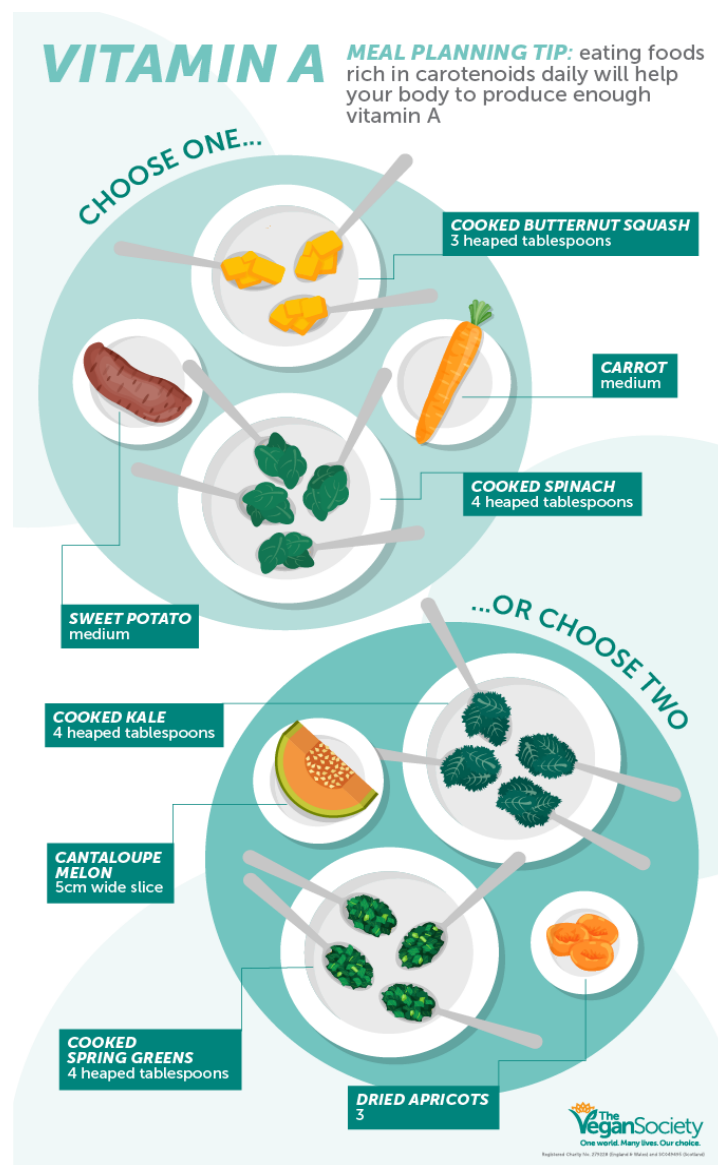
Here are some tips that will help you to get your daily intake of carotenoids as part of a balanced diet:

## Choose one...

- Cooked butternut squash – 3 heaped tablespoons
- carrot – medium
- cooked spinach – 4 heaped tablespoons
- sweet potato – medium

## Or choose two...

- Cooked kale – 4 heaped tablespoons
- cantaloupe melon – 5 cm wide slice
- cooked spring greens – 4 heaped tablespoons
- dried apricots – 3



## Vitamin A tips to take away:

- Ensure that your daily intake of fruit and vegetables features varieties rich in carotenoids in order to help your body produce enough Vitamin A.
- Remember that eating these foods as part of meals or snacks containing fat is thought to help your body to absorb and use the carotenoids.

## Further information

You might be interested to check out the following webpages at [www.vegansociety.com](http://www.vegansociety.com):

- [Nutrition overview](#) – information to help you ensure that your overall diet is balanced and varied
- [Life stages](#) – information about pregnancy, breastfeeding and different age groups, including older adults
- [Meal planning.](#)

## References

1. Committee on Medical Aspects of Food and Nutrition. *Dietary Reference Values for Food Energy and Nutrients for the United Kingdom* London: HMSO; 1991
2. NHS. *Vitamin A*; 2020 <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-and-minerals/vitamin-a/> (accessed 5 June 2024)
3. Vegan Health, *Vitamin A*; 2020 <https://veganhealth.org/vitamin-a/> (accessed 5 June 2024)

*These are general guidelines about nutrition. If you have concerns about your diet, please talk to your doctor about seeing a dietitian.*