

A Guide to the B6 Vitamin

The B6 vitamin, also known as pyridoxine, is one of the most versatile of the B vitamins and yet the body only requires a relatively small amount. The B6 vitamin works closely with all the other B vitamins, especially niacin, folic acid, and Cobalamin and contributes to numerous functions in the body. Amino acids are converted by the B6 vitamin into proteins and it is also required for transforming stored sugar within the body into essential energy. Basically, the B6 vitamin is essential for converting the proteins that are consumed into proteins that the body needs and also for converting the carbohydrates from the form that they are stored in the body to a form that can be used for extra energy.

The body requires a number of different proteins and it is the B6 vitamin that ensures that the correct forms are available. For example, the B6 vitamin will create haemoglobin for carrying oxygen in the blood cells, hormones for regulating blood pressure, neurotransmitters and various enzymes.

The recommended daily allowance for the B6 vitamin is only around 2.0mg but this seemingly insignificant amount is used extremely efficiently within the body to produce over sixty different enzymes. The best sources of the B6 vitamin are high-protein foods such as eggs, fish, poultry, and meat and it is also added to breakfast cereals and bread to ensure that everyone is able to consume their recommended daily allowance, even if they do not eat meat products. An additional amount of the b6 vitamin may be beneficial for the heart and immune system. B6 vitamin supplements are sometimes required by asthmatics and diabetics. However, it is important to be aware that large doses of the B6 vitamin can be toxic.

As the B6 vitamin is found in many common foods the majority of people receive sufficient amounts of the vitamin from their normal diet. There are some groups that may need to take a B6 vitamin supplement to ensure that they obtain the recommended daily allowance. For example, pregnant or breastfeeding women will need a slightly higher amount of the B6 vitamin to allow for the amount of the vitamin that is being absorbed by the baby although it is possible to obtain the extra B6 vitamin from an increased consumption of high-protein foods. Strict vegetarians or vegans, however, and children who do not eat animal products may need a B6 vitamin supplement as vegetables and fruits are poor sources of the B6 vitamin.