

WIDE WORLD OF Watermelon



Watermelon is a refreshing fruit that provides an abundance of vitamins and minerals to the diet. One watermelon nutrient in particular—vitamin C—deserves some extra attention for both its concentration levels and contributions to health.

HOW MUCH VITAMIN C IS NEEDED - AND WHERE IS IT FOUND?

The amount of vitamin C needed every day fluctuates based on an individual's gender, age and pregnancy status. The good (and easy) news is that vitamin C is predominantly found in fruits and vegetables. Use MyPlate recommendations to fill at least 1/2 of the plate with fruits and vegetables, and vitamin C needs will be met (probably without even knowing).

IS WATERMELON A GOOD CHOICE FOR VITAMIN C? **YES!**

25% Eating at least one serving of watermelon every day (2 cups, diced) provides **25% of the Daily Value for vitamin C!**

A CLOSER LOOK AT VITAMIN C

THREE THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT VITAMIN C

1

WOUND HEALING & IMMUNE FUNCTION¹:

Vitamin C is one of many antioxidants that supports a healthy immune system and protects cell damage by 'free radicals'—compounds formed after food is digested or through environmental exposures that build up and are responsible for the aging process.

2

SKIN HEALTH²:

Vitamin C is needed to make the most abundant protein in the body: collagen. Collagen connects body tissues, like the skin, bone, muscles, tendons and cartilage. It acts as a 'strengtheners' making these body parts more resilient and stretchable.

3

FOOD SOURCES³:

While fruits and vegetables are the best sources of vitamin C, how it's prepared is important as well. Vitamin C can be destroyed by heat and light. High-heat cooking temperatures or prolonged cook times can break down the vitamin. Quick-heating methods or using as little water as possible when cooking, such as stir-frying or blanching, can preserve the vitamin. However, the foods at peak ripeness eaten raw contain the most vitamin C. Since most people eat watermelon raw, either on its own or in a recipe, this is good news for watermelon lovers.

VITAMIN C + IRON = A MATCH MADE IN ABSORPTION HEAVEN

Iron is an essential nutrient involved in many processes including oxygen delivery to every cell in the body and child mental development⁴. While iron from meats, poultry and seafood are more easily absorbable, foods high in vitamin C, like watermelon, can help increase iron absorption from plant-based sources, helping to provide variety and higher quality options across the food supply.

HERE ARE A
FEW PERFECT
PAIRINGS OF
VITAMIN C
AND IRON:

SALMON WATERMELON SLIDERS



SPICY WATERMELON HUMMUS



STACKED JICAMA, CHICKEN AND WATERMELON SALAD



HOW TO GET MORE VITAMIN C IN THE DIET WITH WATERMELON?

All year long and all day long – the wide world of watermelon is a delicious solution to get more vitamin C into the diet.

Watermelon is more than a raw fruit or snack; watermelon can be an ingredient. Watermelon can be used in a wide variety of recipes as an appetizer, mocktail (or cocktail), entrée, sauce or salsa.



Visit [watermelon.org](https://www.watermelon.org) for complete recipes and more meal inspirations.

REFERENCES:

- 1 National Institutes for Health. Vitamin C Fact Sheet for Consumers. <https://ods.od.nih.gov/pdf/factsheets/VitaminC-Consumer.pdf#:~:text=Vitamin%20C%20also%20known%20as%20ascorbic%20acid%2C%20is,bodies%20convert%20the%20food%20we%20eat%20into%20energy>
- 2 National Institutes for Health. Vitamin C Fact Sheet for Health Professionals. <https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/VitaminC-HealthProfessional/>

- 3 Harvard T.H.Chan School of Health. Nutrition Source. <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/vitamin-c/#:~:text=Did%20You%20Know%3F,can%20help%20boost%20iron%20absorption.>
- 4 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Iron. <https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/VitaminC-HealthProfessional/>



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