BITE OF HOPE
NEWSLETTER






Editorial Message

Have you ever felt like some days your body just doesn't respond the same way? Sometimes we feel tired, distracted, or lower on energy than usual, and our first thought is: "I need more sleep" or "It's probably stress."

But sometimes, our body may be asking for something more.

This month at Bite of HOPE, we want to talk to you about two quiet allies of wellness: B Complex vitamins and iron, nutrients that work behind the scenes to help you feel energized, maintain balance in the body, and support essential functions in your everyday life.

Through this edition, you will discover why these nutrients are so important, where to find them in everyday foods, and how small changes in your diet can become a powerful tool for feeling better.

Because eating well is not about being perfect—it is about learning to listen to our bodies and nourish them with intention.

With love,

The Bite of HOPE Team

B Complex: The Invisible Engine of Your Energy

In our culture, vitamins are often seen as synonymous with wellness. You have probably heard a grandmother say, "That child needs vitamins," when seeing a child tired or without appetite. But what are vitamins, really? Vitamins are a group of essential compounds that function as key building blocks for our metabolism and cells to operate properly. As "micronutrients," the body only needs them in small amounts, but their impact on health is enormous (1).

There are two types of vitamins: those that dissolve in fat and those that dissolve in water. In our previous edition, we discussed the fat-soluble ones (such as vitamins K, D, E, and A). Today, the spotlight is on water-soluble vitamins, specifically the well-known B Complex. Because these vitamins are constantly eliminated through urine, the body cannot store them for very long, making daily intake essential to maintaining balance.



Complejo B: El motor invisible de tu energía

En nuestra cultura, las vitaminas son sinónimo de bienestar. Seguramente has escuchado a una abuela decir: "A ese niño le faltan vitaminas" al verlo cansado o sin apetito. Pero, ¿qué son realmente? Las vitaminas son un grupo de compuestos esenciales que funcionan como piezas fundamentales para que nuestro metabolismo y nuestras células operen correctamente. Al ser "micronutrientes", el cuerpo las necesita en pequeñas cantidades, pero su impacto en la salud es enorme (1).

Existen dos tipos de vitaminas: las que se disuelven en grasa y las que se disuelven en agua. En nuestra edición anterior hablamos de las primeras (como la K, D, E y A). Hoy, las protagonistas son las hidrosolubles, específicamente el famoso Complejo B. Debido a que se eliminan constantemente a través de la orina, nuestro cuerpo no puede almacenarlas por mucho tiempo, lo que hace que su consumo diario sea vital para mantenernos en equilibrio.



Interesting fact: Our bodies do not easily store many B Complex vitamins, which is why including foods rich in them every day is so important.

Where can we find these vitamins?

Here is a simple guide to how much the body needs and some of the best food sources:

Vitamin	Daily Requirement	Main Sources
B1 (Thiamine)	1.1 - 1.2 mg	lean pork, macadamia nuts, trout
B2 (Riboflavin)	1.1 - 1.3 mg	Beef liver, dairy products (milk and yogurt have excellent absorption rates), eggs
B3 (Niacin)	14 - 16 mh	Chicken and turkey breast, yellowfin tuna, beef liver, peanuts
B5 (Pantothenic Acid)	5.0 mg	Beef liver, shiitake mushrooms, sunflower seeds, chicken breast, avocado
B6 (Pyridoxine)	1.0 - 1.7 mg	Chickpeas (the most concentrated plant source), salmon, tuna, chicken breast, potatoes
B7 (Biotin)	30 mcg	Beef liver, cooked egg yolk, salmon, sunflower seeds
B9 (Folate)	400 mcg	Beef liver, spinach, asparagus, Brussels sprouts, lentils
B12 (Cobalamin)	2.4 mcg	Clams (exceptionally concentrated source), beef liver, trout, salmon





Iron: The Mineral That Carries Oxygen Through Your Body

Lastly, let's talk about iron. Although it is not a vitamin, it is an essential mineral that transports oxygen throughout the body through hemoglobin. There are two ways to obtain iron: "heme" iron, which comes from animal-based foods (meat, poultry, fish) and is easily absorbed, and "non-heme" iron, found in vegetables, legumes, and grains (3).

A helpful trick: Vitamin C is iron's best friend, especially plant-based iron, because it helps the body absorb it better. On the other hand, excess compounds found in grains or grapes may make absorption more difficult. Remember that everyone has different iron needs depending on lifestyle and metabolism, so it is always best to consult a healthcare professional before taking supplements (4).



Important tip: how to absorb iron better

Great food pairings to help your body better absorb plant-based iron:

- Lentils + lemon
- Spinach + tomato
- Beans + bell peppers
- Fortified cereals + strawberries

⚠️ Avoid drinking coffee or tea immediately after meals rich in iron, as they may reduce absorption.



When Nutrients Work Together

We often think about nutrients separately, but the body works as one big team.

Vitamin B9 (folate) and B12 help form healthy red blood cells, while iron helps transport oxygen through them.

In short:

🧠 More support for the brain
⚡ More energy for daily life
🩸 Better blood health

When one of these nutrients is missing, the body may feel more tired or have a harder time concentrating.

Did you know?

Many people believe feeling tired all the time is normal, but sometimes it may be related to eating habits or a lack of essential nutrients. Small daily nutrition changes can make a big difference in how you feel.

Food of the Month – Lentils: Small, Powerful, and Full of Nutrients

Now that we know how iron and some B Complex vitamins help support energy and blood health, let's bring it to the plate.

Lentils are one of those simple, affordable, and highly nutritious foods that deserve more space in our kitchens.

Although they are small, they offer tremendous nutritional value and are an excellent source of iron, folate (vitamin B9), plant-based protein, and fiber.

Why are lentils so important?

Lentils provide nutrients that help keep the body strong and energized. Their benefits include:

- 🩸 A great source of plant-based iron
- 🌱 Rich in folate (vitamin B9), essential for blood health
- ⚡ Provide sustained energy
- 🌿 Support digestive health thanks to fiber
- 💪 A good source of plant-based protein

Long-Lasting Energy

Unlike some ultra-processed foods, lentils help maintain more stable energy levels throughout the day.

This means:

- Less sudden hunger
- More fullness and satisfaction
- More consistent energy



How to Include Them in Your Daily Meals

You can add lentils to:



- Soups
- Salads
- Vegetable bowls
- Rice dishes or side dishes
- Veggie burgers

✔️ Affordable
✔️ Easy to prepare
✔️ Very versatile









Recipe of the Month

Lentil Salad with Vegetables and Lemon



INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups of lentils, soaked overnight
- 1 cucumber, diced
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 cup of cherry tomatoes, halved
- ½ red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 cup of fresh spinach, chopped
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 2 tablespoons of olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

Fresh parsley (optional)

PREPARATION

1. Soak the lentils overnight; drain the water, pat them dry with paper towels, and season with olive oil, salt, garlic powder, and onion powder. Bake on a baking sheet at 380°F for 10 to 15 minutes.

2. In a large bowl, combine the cucumber, tomatoes, onion, bell pepper, and spinach.

3. Add the crispy lentils.

4. Whisk together the lemon juice, olive oil, salt, and pepper.

5. Pour the dressing over the salad and mix well.

6. Refrigerate for 15 to 20 minutes before serving.

Why is this recipe such a great option?

This salad combines iron + vitamin C, an excellent combination to help improve iron absorption.

In addition, it provides:

✔️ Fiber
✔️ Plant-based protein
✔️ B Complex vitamins
✔️ Freshness and flavor



At Bite of HOPE, We Believe Health Begins with Small Steps

Healthy eating should not feel complicated or restrictive.

Sometimes, something as simple as adding more lentils to your week, pairing vegetables with lemon, or learning about a new nutrient can become a meaningful act of self-care.

Every meal is an opportunity to nourish your body, strengthen your energy, and feel better.

✨ Eating well does not mean being perfect—it means learning to make more mindful choices every day.

Knowledge is power, and your health is in your hands.



Support Our Alumni Entrepreneurs

Did you know many Bite of HOPE alumni run their own food businesses? From catering to desserts, and healthy, delicious options, our graduates are bringing their culinary skills to the real world.

We invite you to check out our Alumni Directory and explore the options. Supporting these businesses means enjoying amazing products and helping our community thrive.

CLICK HERE for BiteofHOPEDirectoryBook!

Upcoming Talk – July

Calcium: An Essential Nutrient for Strong Bones and Overall Wellness

In this session, you will learn why calcium is much more than just a nutrient for bones. We will explore its important role in bone health, muscle function, heart health, and overall well-being.

We will also explore simple ways to incorporate calcium into your daily diet through accessible and nutritious foods such as dairy products, leafy green vegetables, seeds, and other sources rich in this essential mineral.

We hope to see you there!



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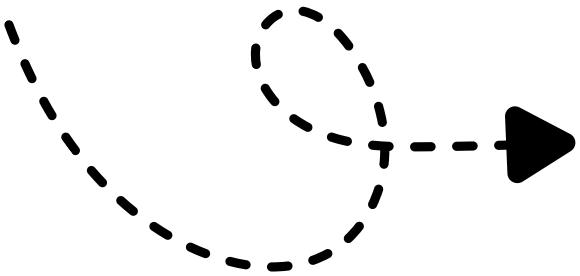
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Bite of HOPE Community

If you would like to dive deeper into these topics and become part of a community focused on health and wellness, we invite you to join our Bite of HOPE group! Participate in our monthly meetings to stay updated on our activities and gain access to the educational materials we actively create.

Scan this QR Code using the camera to join this group!



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Connect with us!

Want to learn how to make nutritious and flavorful meals? Discover our programs and become part of the Bite of HOPE community:

🌐 Website https://abiteofhope.org/
📸 Instagram @abiteofhope
📞 Contact 713-773-0803 ext: 1140 o 1187

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