

Center for Integrative Medicine

Dietary Supplements: Vitamin B6 (Pyridoxine)

Vitamin B6 (Pyridoxine) is essential for making serotonin and norepinephrine, which are important neurotransmitters. Pyridoxine is necessary for optimal function of the brain and nerves, skin, mucus membranes, and the blood. Mild deficiencies are common. Signs of deficiency include sores at the corner of the mouth, upset stomach, weak gait, irritability, and nerve problems. There is sound scientific evidence supporting the use of pyridoxine to treat pyridoxine deficiency, hereditary sideroblastic anemia, certain kinds of newborn seizures, and preventing side effects from the antibiotic, cycloserine. Data are mixed on its effectiveness in treating asthma, ADHD, autism, cardiovascular disease, carpal tunnel syndrome, depression, kidney stones, lung cancer, pregnancy-related nausea, premenstrual syndrome, and stroke.

Needs for pyridoxine may be increased in patients with liver failure, alcoholism, congestive heart failure, hyperthyroidism and poor absorption.

Certain medications can also increase the need for pyridoxine. Medications that may increase pyridoxine needs include: isoniazid, penicillamine, estrogen and oral contraceptive pills, hydralazine, and theophylline.

Dietary sources of pyridoxine include: whole grain cereals, beans, peas, vegetables (carrots, peas, potatoes, spinach and other dark green leafy vegetables), milk and other dairy products, eggs, fish, meat, liver and fortified flour. See the US National Library of Medicine site for more information:

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/natural/patient-b6.html>

US Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) or Adequate Intake (AI for infants) for Pyridoxine for

Infants ages 0-12 months: 0.1 – 0.3 milligram	Children 1-3 years: 0.5 milligram
Children 4-8 years: 0.6 milligram	Children ages 9-13 years; 1 milligram
Males ages 14-18: 1 milligram	Females ages 14-18 years: 1 milligram
Adults: 1.3- 1.7milligrams daily	Pregnant or breastfeeding women: 1.9 – 2.0 milligrams daily.

Pyridoxine is generally considered safe at low doses.

Recommended maximum daily intake is 30 -40 milligrams for children less than 8 years old; 60 milligrams daily for 9-13 year olds; 80 milligrams for adolescents and adults including pregnant and lactating women. High doses may lead to nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, increased liver enzymes, headache, sleepiness, sensory neuropathy, acne, rashes, sun sensitivity, breast soreness, decreased folate levels

Some B-complex vitamins contain 50 – 100 mg per serving. Most clinicians recommend that most patients who take supplements should take a B-complex or multivitamin rather than single B-vitamin. Patients who are deficient in one B-vitamin are likely to be deficient in several B-vitamins; some B vitamins have complementary effects.

The products listed below are a *selection* of some that have met quality testing standards set by ConsumerLab. For more information, see <http://www.consumerlab.com/results/vitaminb.asp>?

Product Name/Distributor	Capsule/Tablet Strength	Manufacturer/Distributor
B6	Milligram = mg	
Doctor's Trust™ Vitamins B-6 100 mg	100 mg	Doctor's Trust Vitamins
Mason Natural® B-6 50 mg	50 mg	Mason Vitamins, Inc
B-complex		
GNC B- Complex 50	50 mg	General Nutrition Corp.
Natrol™ B-100 Complex	100 mg	Natrol, Inc
Now® B-50 Vitamin B-complex	50 mg	Now Foods
Puritan's Pride B-50 and B-100 B-complex	50 – 100 mg	Puritan's Pride

www.wakehealth.edu/CIM - See Quick Link to Dietary Supplements