

IS 2011 GOING TO BE THE YEAR YOU SLIM DOWN? DIET RIGHT BY EATING MORE VITAMIN-E-RICH FOOD – IT'LL ENSURE THAT YOU DON'T OVERLOOK YOUR HEALTH WHILE YOU DROP THE POUNDS.

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DROP WEIGHT WITH VITAMIN E

The simple equation for healthy fat loss goes like this: Cut 500 calories per day to lose one pound of body fat per week. But if you don't pay attention to what you're eating, or rather, what you're not eating, you could lose more than just body fat. According to a study published in the *American Journal*

of Clinical Nutrition, women on typical fat-loss diets saw their intake of 12 out of 17 nutrients decline below recommended levels. Out of the nutrients measured, the most marked drop occurred with vitamin E, with some 65 percent of women not meeting the daily quota for this powerful free-radical fighter.

+ SQUASH YOUR FAT WITH TOMATOES AND A BIT OF OLIVE OIL.

LEAN SOURCES OF VITAMIN E

Most vitamin-E-rich-foods are high in fat (mostly the healthy kind!) but keep in mind that fruits and vegetables can also contain some vitamin E. Broccoli, red peppers, kiwifruit, **collard greens**, mangoes and tomatoes contain up to eight percent of your daily value of vitamin E per serving.

The reason why women tend to fall short on vitamin E when they're trying to shed pounds could be because many of its richest food sources – nuts, seeds and olive oil – are high in fat. To lose fat, you ought to cut out the fatty food, right? Not so. While your body is equipped to handle short-term deficits, cutting out an entire macronutrient (in this case, healthy fats) can shortchange your body on important vitamins and minerals that are needed to improve your health and workout results. And vitamin E is absolutely essential to both goals.

WHY VITAMIN E MATTERS

Not getting enough is of particular concern for active women because of its crucial role as an antioxidant in the human body. Acting as a scavenger of damaging free radicals, it

works to slow the damage to our hearts, brains and even our eyes that naturally occurs with age, and even with intense training.

Beyond keeping your insides young and vital, vitamin E helps keep your immune system healthy. It also acts as a natural anti-inflammatory, with potential benefits to everything from your arteries to your joints. And according to a study published in the *British Medical Journal*, severe asthma sufferers tended to have lower circulating levels of vitamin E than those with mild to moderate asthma, so bumping up your intake is a good idea if asthma is keeping you from getting through your workouts.

UP YOUR INTAKE

Because the number of vitamin-E-rich foods is relatively small, you need to eat a well-balanced diet to meet your needs. So how

can you make sure you're getting enough? The key is to include at least a couple of foods rich in vitamin E in your diet every day. Whether it's a handful of almonds as part of an afternoon snack, a sprinkling of sunflower seeds on your salad or a tablespoon of your favorite oil mixed into a stir-fry, plant oils give you the best bang for your dietary buck. From there, round out your diet with plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables: While none are particular powerhouse sources of vitamin E, they all add up in the end. For the biggest boost, add a spoonful of wheat germ to your oatmeal or recovery shake. Although it's not a good choice if you're allergic to gluten, wheat germ is the richest source of vitamin E, and it can net you the daily recommended quota (22 IU) in just one shot.

Q CAN'T I JUST POP A VITAMIN E SUPPLEMENT?

A: No. Research shows that you're better off with food sources whenever possible. One of the challenges with studying vitamin E is that while one form, known as alpha-tocopherol, is most active in the human body, it naturally occurs as eight different chemical forms in food. Since most supplements contain only alpha-tocopherol, the nutritional consensus is that the natural ratio of vitamin E in whole foods is somehow better tolerated.

FOOD INTERNATIONAL UNITS (IU) PER SERVING

Wheat germ oil, 1 tbsp	30
Almonds, dry roasted, 1 oz	10
Sunflower seeds, dry roasted, 1 oz	11
Pasta sauce, marinara, 1 cup	9
Sunflower oil, 1 tbsp	8
Hazelnuts, dry roasted, 1 oz	6
Olive oil, 1 tbsp	3
Spinach, boiled, ½ cup	3
Peanut butter, 1 tbsp	2

+ SLIM SNACK: A TABLESPOON OF NATURAL PB ON RAW VEGGIE STICKS.

TOMATO PHOTO MASTERFILE COLLARD GREENS & PEANUT BUTTER PHOTO PETER CHOU