



# THINK HEALTHY !

*Français au verso*

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THE FAMILY  
HEALTH NEWSLETTER

## About Vitamin C

The human body needs vitamin C for hundreds of processes such as wound healing, collagen and red blood cell production as well as for immune function. Because it is an important [antioxidant](#), this vitamin also protects cells against [free radical](#) damage.



**Vitamin C** is water soluble, that is to say it is soluble in water. Although most mammals can synthesize it, the human body has lost the ability to do so during evolution. The body must therefore derive it through the daily intake of **food**.

**Vitamin C** is absorbed mainly by the small intestine and, in lesser quantity, in the mouth and stomach; it is eliminated through urine. In the body, it is mostly present in the lens of the eye, white blood cells, pituitary gland, adrenal glands and brain.

**Vitamin C** is involved in hundreds of processes in the body. One of these key functions is to help the body produce **collagen**, a protein necessary for the formation of connective tissue in the skin, ligaments and bones. It also contributes to the maintenance of immune function,

activates wound healing, helps form red blood cells and enhances [iron](#) absorption from plant sources.

### It is used for...

Preventing [colds](#) - if strenuous physical activity or cold exposure.  
Preventing [gout](#), [cardiovascular disease](#), [cancer](#), [cataract](#) and [macular degeneration](#). Treating [asthma](#).

### Vitamin C Deficiency

A significant deficiency of **vitamin C** causes **scurvy**, which is manifested by [inflammation](#) and bleeding gums, wounds that fail to heal and generalized body weakness. It is rare in the West, because a daily intake of 10 mg is sufficient to prevent this disease.

People who consume very little fresh produce are more susceptible to **vitamin C** deficiency. Smokers have an increased need for **vitamin C**, as [smoking](#) lowers the amount of **vitamin C** in the body. Source : PasseportSanté.net

THINK HEALTHY ! is a bilingual newsletter published 5 times a year by Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence with the aim of transmitting information to individuals and families on health and to



better understand services offered to the population, especially Anglophones. It is distributed in the areas served by Rimouski Hospital, including the Lower Saint Lawrence, Baie-des-Chaleurs, Gaspésie, North Shore and the Lower North Shore. The newsletters are made possible through funding by Health Canada for Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN), to its Networking and Partnership Initiative Program (NPI) and its Community Health Promotion Project (CHPP). For more information, do not hesitate to contact Marie-Claude Giroux at 418 936-3110 or mcgiroux@heritagelsl.ca.



## Focus on Vitamin C from Food Sources

Colourful and raw **fruits** and **vegetables** are rich in **vitamin C**: red bell [pepper](#), [orange](#), [lemon](#), [grapefruit](#), [cantaloupe](#), [raspberries](#), [strawberries](#), [broccoli](#), [tomato](#), etc.

In general, consuming at least 5 servings of fresh fruits and vegetables meets the recommended daily allowances for vitamin C.

Foods	Servings	Vitamin C
Red bell pepper, raw or cooked	125 ml (1/2 cup)	101-166 mg
Papaya	153 g (1/2 papaya)	94 mg
Kiwi	1 medium fruit	71 mg
Orange	1 medium fruit	70 mg
Mango	1 medium fruit	57 mg
Broccoli, raw or cooked	125 ml (1/2 cup)	42-54 mg
Brussels sprouts, cooked	4 sprouts (84 g)	52 mg
Grapefruit juice	125 ml (1/2 cup)	36-50 mg
Vegetable juice	125 ml (1/2 cup)	35 mg
Pineapple	125 ml (1/2 cup)	34 mg

**Warning.** Air, water and heat (cooking) can destroy vitamin C. To preserve the vitamin C in food, it is recommended to cook vegetables quickly in as little water as possible. Steaming, microwaving or sautéing (Chinese) are other methods of cooking.

### Interactions with Drugs

Oral contraceptives, aspirin and anti-inflammatory drugs, if consumed regularly, can reduce blood levels of vitamin C. People taking these medications might need extra vitamin C. Check with a doctor. Source: PasseportSanté.net

## Big & Small Needs

### Recommended daily allowances for vitamin C

Age	Men (mg/d)	Women (mg/d)
from 0 to 6 months	40 mg*	40 mg*
from 7 to 12 months	50 mg*	50 mg*
from 1 to 3 years	15 mg	15 mg
from 4 to 8 years	25 mg	25 mg
from 9 to 13 years	45 mg	45 mg
from 14 to 18 years	75 mg	65 mg
19 years and over	90 mg	75 mg
Smokers**	125 mg	110 mg
Pregnant Women	-	80 mg (18 years and -) 85 mg (19 years and +)
Lactating Women	-	115 mg (18 years and -) 120 mg (19 years and +)

Source: *Dietary Reference Intakes for Vitamin C, Vitamin E, Selenium, and Carotenoids*, 2000. Food and Nutrition Board, Institute of Medicine. These data are the result of consensus among Canadian and U.S. authorities.

\*In the absence of sufficient scientific data, the authorities have set, not a Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA), but an Adequate Intake (AI). The AI of vitamin C is based on the average daily nutrient intake level observed in healthy North American infants.

\*\*Smoking reduced the levels of vitamin C in the body. Source: PasseportSanté.net



### Useful Website Address

For reference sheets on diseases, natural health products, food; for healthy recipes, expert advice, blogs and more

[www.PasseportSante.net](http://www.PasseportSante.net)

## The Health and Social services Agency of the Lower St. Lawrence Access to Services in English

**This new brochure** presents the services offered in the English language by the health and social services institutions in the Lower Saint Lawrence.

The Program for access to health care and social services in English for English-speaking people in the Bas-Saint-Laurent provides guidance as to offering service in English in the region. Its aim is to improve access to services in English for the English-speaking population, while taking into account the human, physical and financial resources of the institutions.

This brochure is available in the CSSS of the Lower Saint-Laurence, in the office of Accueil et Intégration BSL in Rimouski and the office of Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence in Métis-sur-Mer.

**Ask for it –in English!** Demand can have an impact of an establishment's offer of services in English.

For questions or comments, contact Julie Bérubé (replacing Catherine Turgeon-Pelchat, who is on maternity leave) at 418-724-5231.



**HERITAGE**  
Lower Saint Lawrence  
Bas-Saint-Laurent

is an organization dedicated  
to promoting Anglophone culture

and improving the Anglophone population's health.

If you need assistance in obtaining English services,  
don't hesitate to contact us.

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(Health side of the website under construction)

## INFORMATION SERVICES

Access to English services within  
the Bas-Saint-Laurent health care  
and social services network

