

Current recommendations of the German Nutrition Society (DGE): Higher estimated values for vitamin B12

Together with the Nutrition Societies of Austria and Switzerland, the German Nutrition Society (DGE) has published new estimated values for the intake of vitamin B12.

Up to now, the estimated values for vitamin B12 for adolescents and adults have been 3.0 µg/day. This value has now been increased to 4.0 µg – and for pregnant and breastfeeding women even to 4.5 µg/day.

The biofactor vitamin B12 is an essential vitamin and involved in many vital functions such as cell division, blood formation, DNA synthesis and the breakdown of fatty acids and amino acids, for example homocysteine. Vitamin B12 deficiency can result in anaemia and neurological disorders. Furthermore, psychological complaints such as depressive moods or chronic exhaustion are linked to vitamin B12 deficiency.

In the diet, the biofactor vitamin B12 can only be taken in from animal foodstuffs such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs, milk and dairy products. For this reason, vegans and vegetarians in particular can be affected by a vitamin B12 deficiency. A sufficient supply of vitamin B12 is not possible with plant foods alone. According to the recommendations of the DGE, vegans in particular must take a vitamin B12 preparation permanently.

Elderly people also have an increased risk of an insufficient supply of vitamin B12 from their diet. In addition, gastro-intestinal diseases such as persistent gastritis, Crohn's disease and some medications can lead to vitamin B12 deficiency irrespective of external food intake. The removal of parts of the stomach or intestine can also make it difficult to absorb this vital biofactor.

Source: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Ernährung e. V. (German Nutrition Society) (DGE)