

### Did you know...

We use whole grain products whenever possible.

The salt and pepper shakers indicate that a meal contains more than 1000 mg of sodium, which is about ½ of your daily recommended value.

Menu items may be subject to change without notice due to supply chain issues.

### **Meal Reheating Instructions:**

Home delivered meals should be eaten immediately or refrigerated to avoid spoilage.

#### **For best results**

Reheat meals in the original packaging

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

Place meal on a cookie sheet

Reheat

#### **FROZEN meals**

30 minutes

#### **REFRIGERATED meals**

15 minutes or until the internal temperature is at least 165 degrees.

For highest quality meals, we do not recommend microwave reheating.

Meal planning is important to ensure a predictable supply of all of the macro and micronutrients we need. What if I told you that even with the most precise menu planning you may still be deficient in some vital nutrients? Unfortunately, our bodies do not always absorb the nutrients we need from our food. This is especially true as we age, if we are taking certain medications, have ever had gastric surgery, or if we omit any food groups from our diet.

Vitamin B-12 is a water soluble vitamin found in animal products like meat, fish, poultry and milk. Absorption of this vitamin begins in the stomach where the acids break it free from the food we eat and allows it to bind to a carrier called intrinsic factor. There it travels through the bowels until it meets its final destination in the last portion of the small intestine (ileum) where it is reabsorbed. Factors such as age (as we age we produce less stomach acid), gastric reflux disease, or prior gastric surgery may increase the risk of developing a deficiency.

The only way to truly know if your levels are low is to have a blood test. Those who regularly take acid reducing medication to treat heartburn, follow a vegetarian diet (especially vegans), have had stomach or intestinal surgery (and removal), or are over the age of 50 should ask their doctors about testing their levels for Vitamin B-12. If you want to really impress your physician, ask for a “MMA” (methyl malonic acid) blood test as well which can detect a deficiency of B-12 brewing before you become truly deficient.

Clinical deficiency, advanced beyond low B-12 blood tests, can manifest symptoms like numbness or tingling in the hand and feet, swelling of the tongue or lips, and can lead to anemia (a condition in which the red blood cells do not bring enough oxygen to the organs). It may also cause permanent damage to the nerves as well as cognitive decline. The good news is that many of the foods we eat are supplemented with a “free” form of B-12 that unlike its naturally bound form, does not require stomach acid to be utilized. This form is also available as a vitamin supplement to be taken orally, sublingually (under the tongue) or as a monthly injection given by your physician.

So, despite our inability to meet every nutrient requirement with diet alone, we can prevent nutritional deficiencies like B-12 by being informed, with proper monitoring, and by supplementation as needed.