

# Eggs are an excellent source of choline

Choline is a dietary component essential for normal function of all cells.

Choline is found as phosphatidylcholine (lecithin) in cell membranes and the covering of nerve fibers (myelin sheath).

In 1998 The Institute of Medicine (IOM) identified choline as an essential nutrient for humans and set an adequate intake level for choline at:  
550mg/day for men and 425 mg/day for women, 450 mg/day during pregnancy and 550 mg/day during lactation.

The best dietary sources of choline (per 100g) are beef liver (418mg), chicken liver (290 mg) and eggs (251 mg).

Choline plays a critical role in normal development of the brain, especially the memory center (hippocampus) and neural tube closure.

Studies show that during pregnancy and lactation, maternal reserves of choline are depleted (*J Am Coll Nutr* 2004).

Research findings show choline and carnitine lower lipid peroxidation and promote conservation of vitamin A and E in women (*J Am Coll Nutr* 2005).

Choline is necessary for the synthesis of acetylcholine, an important neurotransmitter involved in memory storage and muscle control.

Choline is an active component of surfactant in the lung and is a precursor of betaine, an osmolyte used by the kidney to control water balance.

Choline functions in the liver as a source of methyl groups required for lipoprotein formation and synthesis of methionine from homocysteine.