

# Finding the Right Nutritional Supplements

What constitutes a good multivitamin? The answer is the same things that make living food healthy. Most multivitamins are made of synthetic ingredients and toxic fillers. They may have all the vitamins you need, but the vitamins are typically in suboptimal amounts and in a cheap form made of mineral salts, which are poorly absorbed. People who take these pills usually don't get the nutrition they need.

These chemical-based supplements also lack that vital combination of nutrients that characterizes living foods. Nature never produces nutrients in isolation. Oranges, for example, contain much more than vitamin C.

Carrots contain much more than beta-carotene. When you eat them, you get a myriad of vitamins, phytonutrients, flavonoids and more that interact in ways that are not fully understood, but that we recognize to be healthy.

When you isolate one of these nutrients and take it in high doses, especially in synthetic form, your body may treat it like a foreign substance. When only synthetic vitamins are consumed, there is generally no synergy or balance. It's similar to taking a drug or medication. It ignores the complexity of nutrition.

Pharmaceutical companies are now jumping onto the phytonutrients bandwagon, realizing that these have a certain appeal to consumers. The problem is that phytonutrients were almost certainly not meant to be consumed one at a time.

The healthiest supplements combine the enzymes, coenzymes, trace elements, antioxidants, activators, phytonutrients, vitamins and minerals, and many other elements, which all work together synergistically. These supplements are called whole-

food supplements and are generally what I recommend.

Whole-food supplements combine portions of the plants we know are healthy and those portions we have not yet discovered to be healthy. I believe it's wise to do this because medical knowledge is expanding so quickly that it gets outdated practically every few years. A nutrient we hadn't heard of a year ago can suddenly be discovered to protect against certain kinds of cancer or disease. You need a comprehensive multivitamin, made from living ingredients and combined with living nutrition.

### **Basics for Everyone**

The reason we have so many vitamin and mineral deficiencies is because most Americans have embraced fast foods and processed foods, rarely consuming adequate amounts of whole grains, fresh fruits, vegetables and nuts and seeds, which are excellent sources of these nutrients. So we do need supplements, preferably whole-food supplements.

When choosing a supplement, you should look for a multivitamin that contains all 13 vitamins and 17 to 22 minerals with 100 percent of daily values. Also, you need omega-3 fats and a phytonutrient powder. That's it!

Realize if you consume a healthy diet, you will probably get at least 50 percent of the daily values of vitamins and minerals. If you are over 50 years of age, you will probably need extra antioxidants, extra calcium and vitamin D, sublingual B-12, and maybe digestive enzymes. If you already have a disease or simply want more protection, start taking extra antioxidants after the age of 40.

When choosing a supplement here is what I recommend for everyone, regardless of age:

- Choose a comprehensive multivitamin that has at least 100 percent of the daily value (DV) or reference daily intake (RDI). Start slowly because they may upset your

stomach. Start with half the recommended amount and space them out during the day after meals. You may increase the amount as tolerated, but do not take more than 100 percent of the daily value.

- Choose a high-quality omega-3 fat to take daily. Start slowly with one a day and increase as tolerated.
- Choose a phytonutrient powder. This powder should contain a combination of colorful organic fruits and vegetables such as red, yellow, green, orange and purple. Start slowly with just a teaspoon a day, and increase the amount as tolerated.

Living foods may cause gas and bloating as your body adjusts to them.

**Don Colbert, M.D.**, is board-certified in family practice and in anti-aging medicine. He also has received extensive training in nutritional and preventive medicine, and he has helped millions of people discover the joy of living in divine health.