

Should We Take a Nutritional Supplement?

We know that healthy, balanced nutrition is our best defence against degenerative diseases. But some consumers argue that "we can get everything we need from food."

In practice, even very careful eaters find it difficult to ensure that they receive the range of essential vitamins, minerals and phyto-nutrients in their daily diet. Here are some reasons:

Crop Nutrient Content

Large-scale, commercial planting and harvesting techniques can lead to big variations in what ends up in our food.

Fact: *Quick harvests give good profits, but not necessarily good nutrition.*



Food Storage

Freezing, refrigeration and long-term food storage deplete food of many essential nutrients.

Imagine: *How long ago was this fish caught?*



Food Processing

Nutrients disappear when fresh food is refined or processed for appearance or taste.

Gone: *There isn't much left after they're through*

Nutrients in whole wheat or other grains	% LOST when refined
Vitamin E	95 %
Vitamin B-6	88 %
Magnesium	84 %
Riboflavin	81 %
Niacin	80 %
Zinc	76 %
Potassium	74 %
Copper	63 %
Selenium	52 %
Folate	41 %

Source: Readers Digest Health

Over-Cooking

Heat destroys many valuable food nutrients.



Boil; Fry; Roast; Steam; Grill; Deep-fry; Double-boil: How many more ways can we dream up to destroy nutrients?

Food Choice and Habit

We don't eat sufficiently wide in variety, often sticking to the few dishes we like.



Sure: Spinach provides nutrients, but only spinach every time won't do either.

Who Says So?

Journal of American Medical Association

"Insufficient vitamin intake is apparently a cause of chronic diseases. Recent evidence has shown that suboptimal levels of vitamins ... are risk factors for chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cancer and osteoporosis."

"Most people do not consume an optimal amount of all vitamins by diet alone. Pending strong evidence of effectiveness from randomized trials, it appears prudent for all adults to take vitamins supplements."

SCIENTIFIC REVIEW AND CLINICAL APPLICATIONS

CLINICIAN'S CORNER

Vitamins for Chronic Disease Prevention in Adults

Clinical Applications

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IN THE ABSENCE OF SPECIFIC PREEXISTING conditions, a usual North American diet is sufficient to prevent overt vitamin deficiency diseases such as scurvy, pellagra, and beriberi. However, insufficient vitamin intake is apparently a cause of chronic diseases. Recent evidence has shown that suboptimal levels of vitamins, even well above those causing deficiency syndromes, are risk factors for chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, and osteoporosis. A large proportion of the general population is apparently at increased risk for this reason.

Suboptimal Amounts of Vitamins
Suboptimal levels of a vitamin can be defined as those associated with abnormalities of metabolism that can be corrected by supplementation with that vitamin. For example, many people in the general population have serum homocysteine levels from 1.02 to 2.53 mg/L (12-15 μmol/L), which fall to baseline levels of 1.08 to 1.35 mg/L (8-10 μmol/L) after a few weeks of supplementation with folate, along with vitamins B₁₂ and B₆. Similarly, in many elderly people, methylmalonic acid levels fall with vitamin B₁₂ supplementation, and elevated levels of parathyroid hormone fall with vitamin D supplementation. Measurements of

Vitamin deficiency syndromes such as scurvy and beriberi are uncommon in Western societies. However, suboptimal intake of some vitamins, above levels causing classic vitamin deficiency, is a risk factor for chronic diseases and common in the general population, especially the elderly. Suboptimal folic acid levels, along with suboptimal levels of vitamins B₁₂ and B₆, are a risk factor for cardiovascular disease, neural tube defects, and colon and breast cancer; low levels of vitamin D contribute to osteopenia and fractures; and low levels of the antioxidant vitamins (vitamins A, E, and C) may increase risk for several chronic diseases. Most people do not consume an optimal amount of all vitamins by diet alone. Pending strong evidence of effectiveness from randomized trials, it appears prudent for all adults to take vitamin supplements. The evidence base for tailoring the contents of multivitamins to specific characteristics of patients such as age, sex, and physical activity and for testing vitamin levels to guide specific supplementation practices is limited. Physicians should make specific efforts to learn about their patients' use of vitamins to ensure that they are taking vitamins they should, such as folate supplementation for women in the childbearing years, and avoiding dangerous practices such as high doses of vitamin A during pregnancy or massive doses of fat-soluble vitamins at any age.

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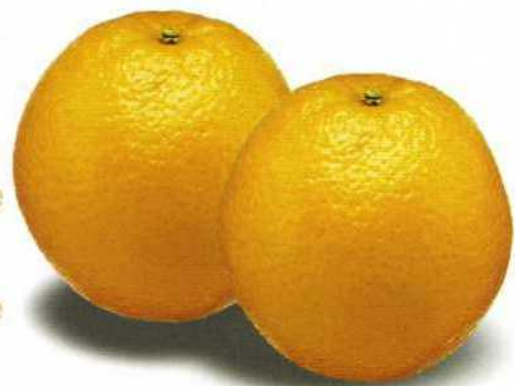
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Which one did you Eat?

One orange can have 5 times more nutritional value than another. Did you eat the right one?



Don't take chances with your health. Take a full-spectrum, balanced and good quality nutritional supplement everyday.