

4.7 Nutritional Supplements

Consume extra nutrients in pill or capsule form.

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Even if you make a considerable effort to eat healthily, studies show that the food we eat today is less nutrient-dense than the food eaten by our ancestors. When you're working to improve your health and want a little boost to your existing efforts, supplements can fill that gap. They're extra weapons in the arsenal of tools you can call on to achieve your health goals.

Supplements can be helpful to fill in gaps in your diet or lifestyle. Many of us don't eat enough vegetables, ingest the right amount of iron, or consume enough essential vitamins like B12 or D. When you know you're not eating as many vegetables or fresh fruits as you should, for whatever reason, you can take them in pill form.

This is especially true when you don't have the time or energy to locate healthy food. You may be traveling or in an especially busy period of your life, with little time to cook meals with fresh ingredients. While not a perfect solution, supplementation can compensate, at least to some degree, for nutrients you're not getting through your diet.

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- Increased vitality, greater energy, and improved overall health.
- A convenient way to ingest a lot of nutrients.

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- Many people are hesitant to trust the efficacy of supplements.
- Determining the most appropriate options can be confusing.

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There is no one-size-fits-all rule to selecting and taking supplements. It's important to take advice from the most reliable sources you can find because there's a lot of conflicting information on what works, what doesn't, and what's safe. For the best results, consider consulting a physician or nutritional specialist who can run tests revealing where you may be deficient and what supplements are likely to be most beneficial for you.

There's a huge range of supplements available, and it's up to you to determine which ones are most suited to your needs and lifestyle. A pregnant woman, for example, will benefit from different supplements than a teenager who refuses to eat their greens.

As a general guideline, however, you may wish to start with a good-quality multivitamin and a source of omega-3 fatty acids, which are essential for brain health and are frequently deficient in modern diets. Vitamin C may help if you have a cold, whereas vitamin D can be invaluable in cold climates, where you may not get enough exposure to the rays of the sun. If you're lifting weights and trying to build muscle, you'll probably wish to take some form of protein supplementation. This is not an exhaustive list—you should consult someone regarding your particular situation.

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1. "How Modern Food Can Regain Its Nutrients":
<https://bbc.com/future/bespoke/follow-the-food/why-modern-food-lost-its-nutrients/>
 2. "Is Modern Food Lower In Nutrients?":
<https://chemistryworld.com/features/is-modern-food-lower-in-nutrients/4018578.article>
 3. "What Vitamins You Should Take Is a Personalized Decision":
<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/which-vitamins-should-you-take>
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