

Nutrition News: May 2022 Vitamin & Mineral Supplements



Vitamin/Mineral Supplements

Many people benefit from vitamin and mineral supplements, including those who skip meals, have irregular eating habits, and eat large amounts of processed and refined foods. There are also certain groups of people who are at particular risk of nutrient deficiencies because of other lifestyle, environmental or disease factors.

Older adults often have a higher nutrient need than younger people due to reduced absorption and metabolism, decreased dietary intake, and illnesses.

Loss of smell and taste, and dental problems can contribute to a decreased appetite and poor nutrient intake.

Older adults who are depressed or eat alone may not eat enough to get all the nutrients they need from food.

Those age 65 and older are more likely to need to increase their intake of several nutrients, particularly vitamin B6, vitamin B12 and vitamin D because of reduced absorption. These people may benefit from a vitamin and mineral supplementation program.

Postmenopausal women have high calcium needs, up to 1500 mg per day in those not taking hormone replacement therapy. This dosage is not usually found in a multivitamin and therefore a calcium supplement may be beneficial.

Someone who is chronically ill has a higher nutrient need and may find vitamin and mineral supplements useful.

It is worth considering taking extra vitamin C, vitamin E and beta carotene as several studies show that these vitamins in larger doses may help protect against aging-related disorders such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease and cataracts.

General Guidelines for Buying and Taking Supplements:

A well-balanced multivitamin supplement is usually better than several single supplements. Many of the well-balanced multivitamin supplements contain approximately 100 percent to 300 percent of the RDA for those vitamins and minerals which may have protective effects or are often lacking in the diets of many people.

Expensive supplements are not necessarily better. It's more important to check the nutrient content of the supplement.

Vitamins work with foods, so supplements should be taken with meals.

Discuss any supplementation programs with your primary care physician before starting.