

Often, people are taking a variety of vitamins and supplements, but are sometimes unsure as to why. Maybe they heard they were beneficial from an article, the news, or from a friend. There is so much information and misinformation out there, it's difficult to decipher what supplements may be suitable for you and your individual needs.

Across the board, any type of daily multivitamin and omega-3 fish oil is good for you. In theory, you should get the majority of your nutrients from the foods you eat as part of a healthy diet, which should include the following: plenty of fruits and vegetables; lean proteins; whole grains; and unsaturated, heart-healthy fats. A multivitamin is for assurance that you will get all of the nutrients you need every day, because even nutritionists don't always have a perfect diet all the time! It's not necessary to spend a fortune on pricey and highly concentrated multivitamins. The excessive nutrients your bodies won't absorb simply get excreted. Any type of vitamin is sufficient to provide the minimal amount of vitamins and minerals required daily. For best absorption or to minimize stomach upset, take your multivitamin 30-60 minutes before or after a meal. A queasy stomach can be a common complaint with taking a multivitamin. Experimenting with different brands or taking your vitamin before bed may minimize the problem.

Another important supplement everyone should take daily is omega-3 fish oil. Omega-3 fat is an essential fatty acid (EFA), meaning it is a necessary nutrient for bodily functions. It is not produced within the body, so it must be obtained in the diet. Omega-3 has several benefits, including: enhancing brain and heart health, reducing inflammation, and possibly lowering bad cholesterol levels; plus, it contains antioxidant properties which protect cells from harmful substances. As an added bonus, it's great for healthy hair, skin, and nails.

Unlike multivitamins, certain brands of fish oils are better than others. Standards for fish oil supplements do not exist in the United States, so it's important to know what to look for on the bottle. Ultimate Omega by Nordic Naturals is one of the best supplements on the market, available at GNC stores or Whole Foods supermarkets. This brand provides the most concentrated and essential components of fish oils- eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA). If you compare the concentrations of these ingredients to some less expensive brands, the formulations of EPA and DHA is much lower



sorting out SUPPLEMENTS

to the Ultimate Omega supplement.

For females, 500 milligrams of calcium two to three times per day should be sufficient. Your body can only absorb 500 milligrams of calcium at a time, so spread out accordingly during the day. Calcium supplementation is not necessary if you are getting substantial calcium in your diet. Women should get about 1200-1500 milligrams per day. An eight ounce glass of milk contains about 300 milligrams. Calcium is available in other foods in addition to dairy products, some include the following: green leafy vegetables, providing about 200 milligrams per cup; three-ounces of sardines, providing a little more calcium than one cup of milk; fortified foods such as orange juice, providing 240 milligrams per cup; and some fortified cereals provide up to 1,000 milligrams of calcium per cup. With a little calculating, you can figure out if calcium supplementation is necessary for you.

A variety of healthy foods should be the cornerstone of your daily diet. Supplements taken in moderation can be very effective to ensure you are as healthy as you can be, and feel your best every day.

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on the cheaper ones. Plus, Nordic Naturals supplements are mercury-free. For many reasons, this one is worth the splurge! Recommended dosage is two tablets per day (1200 milligrams), taken with food for maximum absorption.

For fish eaters...fatty fish such as salmon and tuna contain about 500 milligrams of omega-3 fat per three to four ounce serving. You would need to consume two three-ounce servings of fatty fish every day to get adequate omega-3; if not, go for the supplement. If you frequently consume a lot of fish during the week, one tablet per day should be sufficient to get the omega-3 you need.

Many use flaxseed oil (or ground flax) to get their omega-3. It's a great, unsaturated fat to use on cereals, in smoothies, however you like. Flaxseed is a plant based omega-3, comprised of alpha-linolenic acid (ALA). ALA must be converted to the EPA and DHA form in order for the body to absorb it. So, the ALA loses some of its efficacy during this conversion. Flaxseed is beneficial and continue to use it if you like the taste on certain foods. But, if you are only using it for the omega-3 value, switch