



Health News

from Ponte Vedra Wellness Center

pontevedrawellnesscenter.com  

Dr. Erika Hamer, DC, DIBCN, DIBE



Benefits from Multivitamins

Multivitamins are a long-time staple in the ever expanding world of supplements. They have been around for decades and have been the subject of much debate among health researchers. Can multivitamins actually help prevent serious diseases?

The debate is still not over. However, most health professionals agree people in North America do not eat enough healthy foods and frequently fail to meet their daily minimum nutritional requirements. Studies show calcium, magnesium, vitamins C, D and E are especially low in our population.

Other factors also contribute to vitamin and mineral deficiencies. Many fruits and vegetables grow in nutrient deficient soil. Today's produce often has much lower levels of nutrients compared to only a couple of decades ago. To make matters worse, fruits and vegetables lose even more nutritional content during transport and storage.

The support for daily multivitamin use is confirmed by a number of well-regarded medical institutions, including the Harvard Medical School. In an article that appeared in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Harvard medical specialists commented that low nutrient intake increases the risk of long-latency deficiency diseases, including cancer,

cardiovascular disease and neurological problems.¹ Taking a multivitamin with minerals has proven effective at protecting health in numerous studies. Research reveals consistent multivitamin use may help your body by reducing inflammation, cutting the risk of chronic disease, boosting the immune system and protecting neurological function.²

However, the National Institutes of Health responded to the Harvard article by cautioning people that more research is needed, and taking a multivitamin does not *guarantee* protection from developing serious diseases.³

Also, multivitamins do not contain fiber and some other beneficial plant nutrients, which is why eating plenty of healthy whole foods is important. Of course, your chiropractor also recommends you exercise and maintain an appropriate weight level.

Everybody Is Different

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to multivitamins. Your age, your sex and your state of health all must be taken into consideration.



Exercise of the Week Side Crunches with Exercise Ball in a Supine Position

(Consult your chiropractor before engaging in this or any other exercise.)

Difficulty: Moderate to advanced

Start: Lie on back with arms to side, palms up. Position ball behind legs so it can be lifted off floor with hamstrings/adductors.

Exercise: Lift ball just off floor. Pull stomach inward while inhaling and lift head and shoulders. As you exhale, tilt sideways, reaching for ball. Keep arms parallel to floor at all times. Return to starting position, then switch sides.

Repeat 10-15 times.



Your best option is to talk to your chiropractor before purchasing a multivitamin. He or she is familiar with your health background and can recommend what multivitamin – or any other supplements – would be right for you.

Men

Studies show multivitamin supplementation can benefit men in a number of ways. A randomized, double-blind and placebo controlled study enrolled 215 men between the ages of 30 and 55. After being divided into two groups, half of the men received a multivitamin and the other half received a placebo. After 33 days, the multivitamin group reported feeling less stress, improved mood and enhanced energy. This group was also more successful at completing mental tasks. The placebo group saw no health benefits.⁴

Men should not take a multivitamin that includes iron (unless they have an iron deficiency). Their bodies do not require as much iron as women, and getting too much iron can damage the internal organs.

Women

Research also confirms multivitamin's therapeutic value for women. A long-term study of 88,000 women who used multivitamins consistently over 15 years showed a reduced risk for colon cancer.⁵

Human Psychopharmacology published a study that revealed women taking multivitamins performed better in extended multi-tasking activities and felt less fatigue. The same research indicated the multivitamin group slashed levels of homocysteine, an amino acid that is a risk factor for heart attacks and stroke.⁶

And in a Swedish study, women aged 45 to 70 who took multivitamins reduced their risk of first time heart attacks.⁷

Children

Like adults, today's kids do not eat enough fruit and vegetables, and eat too much low nutrient processed foods. Their immune systems face an uphill battle against ever increasing environmental toxins and pollution. Obese children have additional stress inflicted on their bodies by excessive weight.

Unfortunately, many multivitamins for children contain too much sugar and chemical binders. Children should never be given adult multivitamins, as it could overwhelm their smaller livers. Talk to your chiropractor for advice and recommendations about multivitamin options for your kids.

Seniors

Your nutritional needs change throughout your life. As you age, your digestion system becomes less effective at absorbing nutrients. Seniors are more likely to suffer from serious or chronic diseases that can impact nutrient levels in the body. Multivitamin supplementation may be effective at counteracting some of the nutritional challenges that seniors' face.

* * *

If you are not eating as well as you should, a daily multivitamin may help you to meet proper nutritional requirements. But make sure you are not overdosing on vitamins if you combine your multivitamin with other supplements. If you are not sure about this, ask your chiropractor! Do you have a history of cancer? Talk to your doctor or chiropractor before consuming multivitamins.

Quote to Inspire

"I've found that luck is quite predictable. If you want more luck, take more chances. Be more active. Show up more often."

- Brian Tracy

References and sources:

1. Long-latency deficiency disease: insights from calcium and vitamin D - *Am J Clin Nutr* 2003; 78:912-9.
2. The effects of a multivitamin/mineral supplement on micronutrient status, antioxidant capacity and cytokine production in healthy older adults consuming a fortified diet - *J Am Coll Nutr* 2000; 19(5):613-2.
3. NIH State-of-the-Science Conference Statement on Multivitamin/Multimineral Supplements and Chronic Disease Prevention - *National Institutes of Health* 2006.
4. Scientific study suggests multivitamin can add sparkle - *Northumbria University, press release, June 3, 2010.*
5. Multivitamin Use, Folate, and Colon Cancer in Women in the Nurses' Health Study - *Ann Intern Med* October 1, 1998 129:517-524.
6. Effects of a multi-vitamin/mineral supplement on cognitive function and fatigue during extended multi-tasking - *Human Psychopharmacology: Clinical and Experimental* Volume 25, Issue 6, pages 448-461, August 2010.
7. "Multivitamin use and the risk of myocardial infarction: a population-based cohort of Swedish women - *Am J Clin Nutr* November 2010 92: 5 1251-1256.

Wellness Express™ newsletters are written and designed exclusively for chiropractors
Writer/Editor: David Coyne
Writer: Dr. Christian Guenette, DC
Design: Elena Zhukova
Photos: Fred Goldstein

Disclaimer: Information contained in this Wellness Express™ newsletter is for educational and general purposes only and is designed to assist you in making informed decisions about your health. Any information contained herein is not intended to substitute advice from your physician or other healthcare professional.