

Vitamin Tips for a Healthier You

Getting all the nutrients we need on a daily basis can be a difficult task. Most people find it daunting to incorporate the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables, high-fiber whole grains, healthy fats and lean protein. So, what is one to do? An osteopathic physician explains how you can incorporate multivitamins and supplements into your diet to help satisfy those nutrient needs.

“Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, healthy fats and protein are crucial in ensuring that we get the vitamins, minerals and nutrients needed on a daily basis. Multivitamins are not intended to take the place of a healthy diet, but they can provide a healthy foundation in case you don’t get certain nutrients on a given day,” says our consulting physician.

Doctors note that there are a few things to consider when taking a multivitamin.

1. **Get the right multivitamin.** “Your multivitamin should include vitamins A, B1 (thiamine), B2 (riboflavin), B3 (niacin), B5 (panthothenic acid), B6 (pyroxidine), B7 (biotin), B9 (folic acid), B12, C, D, E and K. Minerals should include copper, chromium, magnesium, manganese, molybdenum, selenium and zinc,” our doctor indicates. Multivitamins are recommended to be taken daily and at any age.
2. **Multivitamins should include 100% of the recommended daily allowances.** “By taking the maximum amount, this ensures that no matter your diet, you will fulfill your daily recommended vitamin and mineral intake,” this physician says.
3. **Take the pill that’s right for you.** If you have issues with swallowing pills consider smaller pills, chewable pills or powders you can mix with water. If you have any food sensitivities such as wheat or dairy, or prefer a vegetarian preparation make sure to check the ingredient label. “Multivitamins generally provide the same benefits, so find the one that works best for you,” our doctor says.
4. **Eat something.** “Taking vitamins on an empty stomach can upset it and make you feel nauseas,” the doctor says.
5. **Keep track of what you take.** “If you take many supplements, you may be getting more than you need of certain vitamins and minerals, especially the fat soluble vitamins A, D, E, and K. You may want to contact your physician about any potential risks, especially if you are taking prescription medications,” our physician says.

In addition to a multivitamin, sometimes additional vitamin and mineral supplements are needed:

1. **If you’re a vegetarian or vegan.** Vegetarians often lack nutrients found in meat, like B12 and iron. “A multivitamin should stabilize your B12 intake, but many find the need for an additional iron supplement,” says Dr. [LAST NAME]. For vegans, who might miss out on their daily dose of calcium and Vitamin D, our physician recommends drinking soy milk or any other fortified milk alternative to keep levels up.

2. **If you're feeling down.** "People with low levels of vitamin D, magnesium and omega-3s are more likely to show signs of depression," says the doctor we consulted. When this happens, our physician recommends adding all three. "Omega-3s have been shown to support brain health and magnesium has been shown to help the body feel calm, relaxed and satisfied."
3. **If you want to boost your body's resilience.** "The spice Turmeric and Flax seed oil help to reduce inflammation in the body and fight off sickness," says the doctor. This oil helps support the joints and improves heart and brain health.

"Vitamins don't take the place of eating healthy. It is important to keep up a well balanced diet and to eat foods rich in vitamins and minerals when you are able to," our physician points out. "Multivitamins are there as your safety net in case you fall short on vitamin and mineral intake with your diet."

Preventive medicine is just one aspect of care osteopathic physicians provide. DOs are fully licensed to prescribe medicine and practice in all specialty areas, including surgery. DOs are trained to consider the health of the whole person and use their hands to help diagnose and treat their patients.