

Purchasing Multivitamin/Mineral Supplements

Below is information that provides general guidelines for purchasing multivitamin/mineral supplements. Your needs may be different based on your diet. Schedule an appointment with your dietitian to discuss tailoring your vitamin and mineral needs.

Look for the following

The Basics

Choose a supplement that has at least 100 percent of the Daily Value for thiamin (B-1), riboflavin (B-2), niacin (B-3), B-12, folic acid, vitamin D, and vitamin C.

Vitamin A

Aim for no more than 3,000 IU of vitamin A in supplements each day. The majority of vitamin A in supplements comes from retinol (which may also be listed as vitamin A palmitate or acetate). In high levels this can lead to birth defects, liver abnormalities, and hip fractures. Beta carotene is also often a source of vitamin A found in supplements. Look for supplements containing 5 mg or less of beta carotene.

Vitamin B-12

People age 50 and older should get at least 2.4 mcg a day from a supplement or fortified foods. As we age, we have less stomach acid needed to extract B-12 from foods.

Vitamin C

Intake in supplements is suggested to be 90 mg for men and 75 mg for women. This is higher than the current Daily Value of 60 mg.

Vitamin D

Vitamin D aids in absorption of calcium. Look for a multivitamin with 400 to 1000 IU of vitamin D. Recommendations are 200 IU a day for adults 50 and under, 400 IU for people aged 51 to 70, and 600 IU for anyone over 70 and includes what you get from the sun. Current research says we may need more. Ask your dietitian to help determine your needs based on how you eat.

Vitamin K

Aim for at least 20 mcg of vitamin K. The recommended intake is now 80 to 90 mcg for women and 120 mcg for men. However, very few MVI's have 80 mcg. Too much Vitamin K can interfere with blood thinning drugs, so if you are taking these drugs, talk to your dietitian about how much vitamin K you are getting from foods and supplements.

Calcium

Most supplements contain less than the Daily Value. This is due to the calcium not being able to fit into one pill. If you wish to meet the recommended 1000 to 1200 mg of calcium, three to four dairy servings, or a separate supplement would help to meet this goal.

Iron

Look for zero to 8 mg of iron. While some pre-menopausal women are deficient, too much iron can cause constipation or iron overload in those genetically susceptible. A Daily Value of 18 mg is okay for pre-menopausal women.

Minerals

Look to get less than 100% of the Daily Value of chromium, copper, selenium, and zinc.

Magnesium

Aim for at least 100 mg of magnesium in supplements. Recommendations are 320 mg for women and 400 mg for men. More than 400 mg in a MVI or other supplement may cause diarrhea in some individuals.

Below is a list of some supplements approved by *consumerlabs.com*, a private organization that independently tests various health, wellness, and nutrition related products.

- **Kirkland Signature™** Daily Multi, With Lycopene & Lutein and Calcium
- **Vitamin World®** One Take-One®, Time Release
- **Puritan's Pride** Time Release Complete One®, Long Acting
- **One A Day®** Women's MVI/Mineral Supplement
- **Centrum® Silver®** Specially Formulated MVI/Mineral Supplement for Adults 50+, Now with Lycopene, Improved Formula
- **Member's Mark®** Complete Multi, Now With Lycopene, USP
- **Puritan's Pride®** ABC Plus® Senior, MVI/Mineral Formula, with Lutein and Lycopene, Iron Free Formula
- **One Source Complete®** 50 Plus Advanced Multivitamin and Mineral for Adults 50+, Improved Formula