

Complete Health Truths

Exploring natural health by getting back to the basics.

How to Choose a High Quality Supplement/Vitamin?

By Christina Mroz, Health Coach

What Does This Mean?

Natural: nutrients come from vegetable, mineral, or animal sources that undergo little or no processing and retain most of their nutritional value. Examples are fish liver oil and all minerals.

Natural Source: nutrients are from vegetable, mineral or animal sources but undergo processing. Examples are vitamins A and D from fish liver oil, vitamin E, lecithin, digestive enzymes, protein powders and amino acids.

Nature “Identical”: laboratory-manufactured nutrients that are identical in structure. It is more costly or difficult to extract the same nutrients from all-natural sources, which would make them too expensive or scarce. Examples are vitamin C and the B vitamins.

Synthetic: are laboratory-manufactured nutrients that are not similar to the natural nutrient. For example, vitamin E cannot be copied exactly. Synthetic vitamins are inexpensive and are thus by many manufacturers. These are often very inexpensive.

Whole Food or Food-grown: use raw materials by combining minerals and some pharmaceutically manufactured vitamins with yeast cells. These are the most usable and available nutrients to the body. They are also the most expensive.

Tablets: contain fillers, binders, lubricants, and coatings. Fillers make the tablet large enough to take comfortably when the nutrient is a very small amount. Binders hold ingredients together. Lubricants coat the ingredients so they do not stick to the machines and are easier to swallow. These added ingredients can hinder absorption in anyone who lacks stomach acid, experiences digestive problems or suffers from poor assimilation of nutrients.

Time-released: contain substances that reduce absorption even further, because they release nutrients over an extended period. Since most nutrients are absorbed quickly in the small intestine, time-released tablets and capsules are the least absorbed. Those with weak digestive systems have a hard time breaking them down.

Sublingual: bypass the digestive tract and are absorbed under the tongue. Vitamin B12 is an example.

Chewables: contain natural or artificial sweeteners, flavoring and coloring to improve their taste and appearance along with the binders, fillers and coatings. (Be sure to brush your teeth after taking chewable supplements to avoid tooth decay.)

Capsules: contain fillers. Capsules dissolve quickly and are easy to digest.

Powders and Liquids: Powders and liquids are easily absorbed. Check labels for added sweetening, flavoring and coloring.

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Are you taking a synthetic vitamin? Take the test!

Print off the label and read the list of ingredients.

Look for ingredients such as *ascorbic acid, natural or artificial organic flavoring, sucrose, or yellow 6 lake*. These are all synthetic nutrients. Another item to look for is ingredients that start with *dl* instead of *d*, like *dl-alpha tocopheryl*. Lastly, *pyridoxine hydrochloride, thiamin mononitrate, or cholecalciferol* are all ingredients in synthetic multivitamins.

Check the Label

Calcium gluconate is not equivalent to calcium citrate, just as natural source vitamin E is not the same as its synthetic counterpart. A large difference in price can sometimes be a clue to a poor quality item as well.

It is important to check the “elemental” or true amount of a mineral. In many cases, the amount listed on the label is the mineral plus its carrier substance. For instance, magnesium aspartate contains about four-fifths aspartate and only about one-fifth magnesium. However, if the aspartate is in brackets—magnesium (aspartate)—or if an elemental amount of

magnesium is specified separately—then you know exactly how much magnesium is in each tablet. In some cases, a supplement will contain large amounts of nutrient and minimal carrier substance, and sometimes there is little nutrient and more carrier substance.

If there is more than one nutrient, be sure that each item is listed separately according to its strength. Otherwise, you cannot be sure of exactly what you are getting.

The Real Problem with Synthetic Vitamins

Wasting \$\$. In synthetic vitamins, only 50-70 percent contains natural nutrients. Our bodies usually do not absorb more than 50 percent of vitamins or minerals we take, it is just they way our digestive system works. So if you vitamin is synthetic, your body is only absorbing 25 percent of what is being advertised on the bottle. The rest is literally being flushed down the toilet in your urine.

Some Vitamins/Minerals Work Better in Pairs

Iron is better absorbed with vitamin C and apart from vitamin E.

Vitamin C and bioflavonoids are recommended together

because they enhance each other.

Calcium cannot be absorbed without vitamin D and in balance with magnesium.

Taking Zinc supplements regularly can deplete copper in the body, so small amounts of copper are often recommended with zinc.

Know the Facts:

Some health professionals recommend taking mega doses of vitamins when a cold is coming on, like taking ten one-thousand milligrams of vitamin C. That is the equivalent of eating 150 oranges. It is very unnatural to eat that many oranges in one day.

Most supplements should be taken with food to improve absorption. One exception is bromelain, which should be taken between meals. If you take multiple doses, do not take the supplements all at once, divide them into smaller doses throughout the day.

Resources & Further Reading: (Decide for yourself which supplements are right.)

The Biblical Health Institute
The Great Physician's RX
by Jordan Rubin

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desires to help women
live a healthier life in
mind, body, and soul.
www.completemotions.com