

Learn the truth about multivitamins, supplements

How often do you eat a cup of sautéed spinach? How about three servings of fatty fish, like salmon, per week? Probably not very often, but those are examples of foods and portions that are packed with the recommended amounts of essential nutrients.

Elizabeth Somer, a leading registered dietician and author of several books, including *The Essential Guide to Vitamins and Minerals*, explains: "Even if you follow a healthy diet, a busy lifestyle can make it difficult to obtain the recommended amounts of vitamins and minerals from food alone."

One easy way to maintain good nutrition is to enhance your diet with supplements; however, the frequency of new studies combined with the staggering number of supplements available makes it increasingly confusing to know what's right.

Somer provides the facts surrounding common multivitamin misconceptions:

Misconception 1: It's realistic to obtain all essential nutrients from food.

Even experienced nutritionists have a hard time designing a diet that provides all the essential nutrients for one day, and busy adults often struggle to follow a highly regimented diet. That's not to say it's impossible, but the best approach is to focus on eating nutrient-rich foods as much as possible – like dark leafy greens (good source of lutein for eye health), colourful fruits, whole

grains, healthy proteins and fats (such as salmon, which is a great source of omega-3 fatty acids DHA and EPA) – and fill gaps in nutrition with a daily multivitamin. "Another supplement I always recommend is fish oil," says Somer, "or a vegetarian source from algae, because DHA and EPA benefit eye, heart and brain health."

Misconception 2: Multivitamins have no health benefits.

Although recent studies report that vitamin and mineral supplements do not lower one's risk of heart disease or cancer, these supplements are still proven to be beneficial to one's health. Somer asks: "If a study found that people who drank water had no lower risk for dementia, would you stop drinking water? Of course not, because water, like essential vitamins and minerals, is crucial to health and there is no controversy over its importance for human nutrition."

Misconception 3: Multivitamins are a waste of money.

Multivitamins are a relatively inexpensive tool to achieve proper nutrition. "No reputable health experts will argue that supplements can or should replace a good diet and a healthy lifestyle," she continued. "However, multivitamins and nutritional supplements are one factor in a pattern of living that is known to maintain overall wellbeing. Think of multivitamins as an insurance policy for optimal nutrition – they're meant to supplement, not replace, a healthy diet."

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Low back pain is the most common complaint of all musculoskeletal problems, affecting up to approximately 80% of people in their lifetime. To learn more about treatment options for common complaints like **sciatica, a pinched nerve, bulging discs, degenerative disc disease** and **WHEN and IF** surgery is an option, you are welcome to attend our Knowledge Building Seminar. Limited seating is available, and registration is required. Wednesday, April 30th 12-1 pm at our Georgetown location.



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