

## Dynamic Wellness Newsletter - Supplements #1

# TO SUPPLEMENT OR NOT TO SUPPLEMENT? ... NO LONGER A QUESTION

Like many of you who have shopped for supplements, we at Dynamic Wellness are also consumers. We know how confusing and difficult it is to know what to take. Over the years, we have asked ourselves the same three questions you have probably asked yourself when selecting supplements:

Should I be taking supplements?  
Which ones should I take?  
How do I determine quality?

We've done a lot of research over the years and we could write a book on this subject, but there already are a lot of books out there. TOO MUCH INFORMATION! So, here's our cliff notes version instead. These few pages won't take you long to read and will give you a few helpful tips for buying basic supplements.

We've always believed that taking a daily multivitamin-mineral supplement is a good nutritional insurance policy so our cells will have a daily supply of all the nutrients needed to help protect us from illness and disease. It's essential that we stay healthy at the cellular level!

So we were very pleased when, after almost 40 years of refusing to budge from their position against vitamin supplements, the old-school doctors of the American Medical Association issued an announcement in 2002 that "all adults should take vitamin supplements to help prevent chronic diseases." That's a big step!

There is also growing support for supplementation with Fish Oil (Omega-3 fatty acids) by even the very mainstream American Heart Association (AHA). Benefits of Omega-3s from fish or fish oil supplements are far reaching and include prevention or treatment of everything from cardiovascular disease (CVD) to Depression, Alzheimer's, Arthritis and many other diseases. Psychiatrists are even prescribing omega-3s for depression!

There is no question that the best way to get the nutrients we need every day is to eat a balanced, healthy diet. And we know that a few pills can't make up for a poor diet. But the fact is that many of us are not getting optimal amounts of some of these nutrients.

### BOTTOM LINE:

To enjoy the benefits of optimal health and energy levels, we advise most people to take two key supplements every day:

- A Quality Multivitamin-Mineral
- Fish Oil / Omega-3 Fatty Acids\*

\* People taking blood thinning, anticoagulant or other drugs should consult a physician before taking this or other dietary supplements.

Harvard researchers warn of the potential impact of vitamin deficiencies:

- Too little Folic Acid, Vitamins B6 and B12 increases risk for heart disease and colon and breast cancers
- Too little Vitamin D contributes to osteoporosis and fractures
- Low levels of Vitamins A, E, and C may increase the risk of cancer and heart disease



## ALL SUPPLEMENTS ARE NOT CREATED EQUAL

If you're like most people who have gone to a store or online to buy supplements, you may have been overwhelmed, it can be with so many brands and products to choose from and the baffling lists of ingredients. If you pick up several multivitamin products, for instance, you'll see a wide range of ingredients and ingredient levels on the labels. And then there is the range of dosages and prices.

Are you tempted to say "forget it"? We feel your pain. The question we constantly hear is "what supplements should I buy?"

That's not an easy question but there are some shortcuts. We have found for instance, that when evaluating multivitamin-mineral supplements, there are three ingredients that, if present in the right form and in sufficient quantity, indicate a quality product. Here's a hint: Take a S-E-C (Selenium, Vitamin E, Chromium). (See details in "MULTIVITAMIN GUIDELINES")

### BOTTOM LINE:

A multivitamin quality indicator is ... S-E-C (Selenium, Vitamin E, Chromium)

## MULTIVITAMIN GUIDELINES

We know that reading and comparing multivitamin labels can be a daunting task so we want to give you a few easy-to-remember guidelines to make the selection process simpler. Here's what you should remember:

### 1. "Daily Value" – Forget about it!

The FDA has established a "Daily Value" (DV) for essential vitamins and minerals that we should consume each day through food and supplements. Here's how the FDA explains the Daily Value on their website:

*"Daily Values comprise two sets of reference values for nutrients: Daily Reference Values, or DRVs, and Reference Daily Intakes, or RDIs. DRVs are for nutrients for which no set of standards previously existed. RDIs, on the other hand, replace the term "U.S. RDAs. U.S. RDAs should not be confused with RDAs. The latter are short for Recommended Dietary Allowances, which are set by the National Academy of Sciences. FDA used the RDAs as the basis for setting U.S. RDAs (now called RDIs)..."*

**WHAT?!** Everybody got that??? Even the experts can't agree on what any of these levels should be and more recent research has found that higher levels of some nutrients are more beneficial. Also, Daily Values are far below what is needed by those with chronic degenerative diseases (heart, arthritis, cancers, etc.). So, most multivitamins now contain higher than DV levels of most important vitamins, including B-Complex and C.

**BOTTOM LINE:** Don't worry about Daily Values!

### 2. Natural E = EXCELLENT

When you look at a multivitamin ingredient label, the first thing to look for is whether it contains natural or synthetic Vitamin E. If it contains synthetic Vitamin E, put it back!

How can you tell? The difference is very subtle and sometimes hard to find. But the search is worth it. The natural form is known as "**d-alpha tocopherol**", whereas the synthetic form is called "dl-alpha tocopherol." Some products list this in the "Supplement Fact" section next to Vitamin E, some say "natural Vitamin E" and others hide this in the "Ingredients" section. Here you have to scan through the ingredients until you see either "d" or "dl" alpha tocopherol.

Most cheaper brand multivitamins contain the synthetic "dl-" form of Vitamin E. The natural form is clearly superior in terms of absorption and retention in the body. The synthetic form has the opposite molecular structure of natural Vitamin E and, at best, is only half as active as the natural form and may actually be harmful. (Incidentally, most recent reports that have denounced the value of Vitamin E were based on studies utilizing synthetic Vitamin E!)

**BOTTOM LINE:** Look for Natural Vitamin E—**d-alpha tocopherol**

### 3. Remember to Take a S-E-C

A shortcut to selecting a quality Vitamin-mineral formula is looking at how much "S-E-C" – Selenium, Vitamin E, Chromium – is in each serving. We recommend the following levels (which you won't find in many highly advertised, inexpensive brands):

Supplement	Amount
Selenium, a potent antioxidant	70 – 200 mcg*
Vitamin E, as "d-alpha tocopherol" (natural)	100 – 400 IU**
Chromium, an essential trace mineral that helps balance blood sugar	120 – 200 mcg

\*mcg = microgram – one millionth of a gram

\*\* IU = International Unit – for Vitamin E it is 0.666 (2/3) milligrams

### 4. One-Per-Day or More?

Most one-per-day multivitamin-mineral products don't (can't) contain the recommended levels of some key nutrients such as calcium and other minerals. The pill would be too huge to swallow.

Basically, if you're under 45 and want nutritional insurance to help prevent chronic health problems, a quality one-per-day multivitamin/mineral will be adequate. If you have other health concerns, such as osteoporosis, you may want to add other supplements, such as calcium and magnesium, to your regimen. Or you can take a "several-per-day" multivitamin/mineral supplement that has higher levels of the basic vitamins as well as calcium, magnesium and other nutrients. We'll be discussing other specific nutrients in the next issue.

**BOTTOM LINE:** If you're not at risk for a specific Vitamin or mineral deficiency, a quality one-per-day multivitamin/mineral supplement is adequate, possibly accompanied by a separate calcium/magnesium supplement.

### 5. Any Risks of Too Much?

Yes, with some "mega" supplements you can get too much of some fat soluble vitamins, A,D,E, and K, that are not excreted very quickly and can be toxic at very high levels. We would suggest not buying a multivitamin that contains more than 10,000 IU of Vitamin A.

The types of multivitamins that we are focusing on in this newsletter do not contain potentially harmful levels of any nutrients.

## OMEGA-3s ARE AWESOME!

Omega-3 fatty acids, the essential fatty acids found primarily in fish and fish oil, appear to be the key reason why heart disease has been almost non-existent among Greenland Eskimos for centuries. Their diet is based on high levels of fatty fish.

Extensive research indicates that omega-3 fatty acids reduce inflammation and help prevent certain chronic diseases such as heart disease and arthritis. These essential fatty acids (we must get them from food or supplements) are highly concentrated in the brain and appear to be particularly important for cognitive and behavioral function. Fish oil has also been shown to boost immunity and energy levels and is used to prevent and treat many diseases and conditions including:

- Irregular heartbeat, high triglycerides, high blood pressure and blood clotting.
- Depression and Mood Disorders
- Alzheimer's
- Some Cancers
- Stress and Anxiety

Even the conservative American Heart Association (AHA), in 2002, finally declared that "healthy people should eat omega-3 fatty acids from fish (two servings per week of salmon, mackerel, tuna or sardines) and plant sources (including flaxseed and walnuts) to protect their hearts."

The problem is that too few Americans eat a diet that provides the desirable amounts of omega-3 fats, so fish oil supplements are being widely recommended by experts and

## WHAT FISH OIL SHOULD I BUY?

Once again, let's keep it simple. The labels on Fish Oil products show the two primary "omega-3" fatty acids responsible for the health benefits of fish oil: EPA (eicosapentaenoic) and DHA (docosahexaenoic).

### INGREDIENTS

- The most common fish oil supplements are softgels, with each softgel containing:  
1 g (1000 mg) of Omega-3 Fish Oil  
**300 mg EPA+DHA** (180 mg EPA + 120 mg DHA )
- The National Institutes of Health recommends daily intakes of total EPA + DHA of about 650 mg for healthy people, rising to 1000 mg/day and above for people with therapeutic needs
- Depending on your intake of fish, you will want to take two to four softgels per day for a total EPA + DHA of about 600-1200 mg per day
- For comparison, 3 ½ oz of fresh Salmon (or 1 small can of salmon) provides approximately the amount of EPA + DHA contained in three softgels (900mg total)

### SAFETY

- Good news! Consumer Lab (consumerlab.com), an independent testing company, tested over forty fish oil products and found none of them to contain detectable levels of mercury, nor unsafe levels of PCBs, as has been reported about some fish recently
- Dosages of up to 3g (3000mg) of omega-3 fatty acids (EPA+DHA) are generally recognized as safe by the FDA



## THE DYNAMIC WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

We are providing this newsletter for our clients so we can help you cut through the clutter of the often-confusing information out there and have access to clear, credible facts about a variety of issues that may help you achieve a greater level of health and wellness.

Many of the topics that we will cover in this format come from your questions or are important, topical issues that we feel you should be aware of.

For this issue, the topic of supplementation turned out to be far more complicated than we anticipated. To keep it as simple as possible, we addressed this newsletter to basically healthy working people who are interested in nutritional supplements to help them prevent disease and achieve optimal levels of well-being and energy.




We did not go into all of the special needs and considerations of certain population groups such as pregnant women, menopausal women, seniors, people with specific diseases and conditions, and those taking medications. Many of these issues will be addressed in next month's issue but, if you have questions about any specific needs, please contact us.

## WHAT SUPPLEMENTS SHOULD I BUY?

Since Dynamic Wellness does not have its own line of supplements yet, we wanted to be able to recommend a few brands that you could buy at your local pharmacy that meet our criteria. For the multivitamin, we went to four stores local to us and read the labels of every brand of multivitamin on the shelf. Incredibly, not one basic multivitamin-mineral in any of the stores met our minimum requirements!

But, take heart. There are a few brands available online, at most health food stores, and possibly at your local pharmacy, that do meet our criteria and are reasonably priced. The following are some quality products from fairly well known manufacturers. The products are listed in order of our highest recommendation.

### Multivitamin/Mineral Supplements




Multivitamin/Mineral Product	Serving Size	Selenium	Vitamin E	Chromium	Approx. \$/ Month
 Natrol My Favorite Multiple, Iron-free	6 Capsules Daily *	200 mcg	400 IU (from d-alpha tocopherol)	200 mcg	\$9.00 - \$18.00
 Twinlab Daily One Caps without Iron**	1 Capsule Daily	200 mcg	100 IU (from d-alpha tocopherol)	200 mcg	Less than \$9.00
 Nature Made Essential Mega***	1 Tablet Daily	70 mcg	150 IU (from d-alpha tocopherol)	120 mcg	Less than \$8.00

\* Only the multiple pill dosage is able to provide 1000 mg Calcium and 400 mg Magnesium daily without additional supplementation

\*\* Men and post-menopausal women should limit supplemental iron to no more than 18 mg to prevent risk of iron overload

\*\*\* This was the only Nature Made multivitamin product (out of many) that contains natural Vitamin E. It's available from drugstore.com, walgreens.com and possibly at your local pharmacy or health food store. Their website also states: "We follow the most stringent manufacturing and testing standards established by the United States Pharmacopoeia (USP), the standard setting body recognized by the FDA."

### Fish Oil Supplements

Fish Oil Product	Softgel Size	EPA per Softgel	DHA per Softgel	Recommended Softgels per Day	Total EPA + DHA per Day	Approx. \$/ Month
 Natrol Omega-3 Purified Fish Oil *	1000 mg	180 mg	120 mg	2 - 4	600-1200 mg	Less than \$10.00
 Nature Made Maximum Strength Fish Oil **	1200 mg	216 mg	140 mg	2 - 4	712-1424 mg	Less than \$10.00
 Nature's Bounty Natural Fish Oil ***	1000 mg	180 mg	120 mg	3	600-900 mg	Less than \$7.00

\* The label contains the GMP Seal: "This Seal certifies that the manufacturer of this product uses quality systems and procedures that comply with NNFA's Dietary Supplement Good Manufacturing Practices standards."

\*\*Their website states: "We follow the most stringent manufacturing and testing standards established by the United States Pharmacopoeia (USP), the standard setting body recognized by the FDA. Our Fish Oil products were the first to receive the USP Dietary Supplement Verification Seal (DSVP) for purity, quality, and potency."

\*\*\* The label claims: "Laboratory tested to meet strict quality control standards for potency, purity and disintegration."

DISCLAIMER: The news and other items in this newsletter are intended for informational and educational purposes only. Nothing in this newsletter is intended to substitute for professional medical diagnosis and advice.

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