

# CHOOSING THE RIGHT SUPPLEMENTS

Have you ever walked into a natural health store and looked at shelves and shelves of supplements and had no clue what you were supposed to be looking for? You have a feeling you should be taking something to make you “healthier” but you have no idea where to begin?

Well, you’re not alone. So many people get overwhelmed by the amount of supplements on the market claiming all types of health benefits. The important thing is to understand the following key elements when choosing the right supplement(s) for your needs:

1. Research before you buy – don’t just grab the first thing off the shelf because you have migraines and the formula says “migraine-ease” or something of that nature. Look at the ingredients; research them; make sure there is enough of each particular ingredient to help your condition and that it won’t interfere with other medications or supplements you are taking. Find out about the brand – has the company been around a while and does it have a good reputation? Are the tablets so large that they may not break down and be absorbed properly by your body? Do the pills contain many “filler” ingredients or additives? It is so important to make sure that you are putting quality products into your system that really do work.
2. Supplements are not a substitute for a healthy diet. Don’t believe that if you eat unhealthy, you can simply take lots of vitamins instead. Many people take tons of supplements simply because their diets are not up to par and they believe that the vitamins will “cancel out” those adverse effects. Unfortunately, it doesn’t work that way, so make sure your diet is a good one before adding numerous supplements to your regimen.
3. Something that is healthy and beneficial for someone else may be harmful to you. A good example of this is phytoestrogens. While helpful for women with menopausal symptoms, phytoestrogens can be detrimental to women with estrogen-related problems, such as fibroids or some types of breast cancer.

So what should you start with?

Of course it’s always best to consult with a Holistic Nutritionist or other natural health practitioner trained to provide you with personalized supplement recommendations, because each person’s requirements can differ greatly depending on age and specific health issues. However, the following are 5 supplements that almost anyone can derive benefit from and these can be taken on a continual basis, either individually or as a complete program:

1. Vitamin C – There are numerous benefits to this important anti-oxidant. The amount I usually recommend is 1000 mg/day. If you have a sensitive stomach, take ascorbic acid, which is the most gentle.
2. Green formulas – The equivalent of a serving of vegetables, these formulas are alkalizing to the body, help to control sugar cravings,

contain numerous vitamins and minerals and are detoxifying as well. Many come in capsule form as well, if you can't tolerate the taste of the powder mixed with water. 1 tablespoon per day is enough to reap the benefits of this important supplement.

3. Probiotics – Due to the abundance of anti-biotics that many people take on a yearly basis, there is simply not enough of these “good” bacteria left in the digestive tract. With this supplement in particular it is extremely important to look for a reputable brand, because of the instability of this product. In other words, it may say on the bottle that it contains 5 billion active bacteria when in fact it can contain less than half, or in some cases, none at all.
4. Omega 3 Fatty Acids – these “good” fats are important for everyone and are found in fish oils (make sure they are mercury-free), flax and borage oils. Some oils are tolerated better than others, so you may have to experiment to see which is right for you.
5. Fiber supplement – the average person simply does not get enough fiber in their diet. Unfortunately, many people either overload on wheat fiber or turn to supplements containing psyllium as a solution to this problem, both of which can backfire by causing bloating and constipation, as well as stomach pains. A better choice is flax fiber (ground flax seeds), or inulin fiber, both of which are gentle and non-constipating.

One last note: Remember to take your supplements every day; if they sit on a shelf they can't really help you! ☐

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