

# Vitamins and Minerals 101

## What You Need to Know

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# Vitamins

**A vitamin** is a natural substance found in plants. Although vitamins have no calories and do not provide any energy to the body, we would not feel very energetic if we lacked the proper vitamins in our bodies.

Our bodies do not produce vitamins and therefore we need to obtain them either through foods or supplements.

Vitamins are so important because they assist our bodies in performing millions of necessary chemical reactions everyday.

In order for vitamins to do their work they must work with minerals.

# Minerals

**Minerals** are also found in plants. The minerals found in plants come from the soil and the minerals found in the soil come from the constant process of water washing over rocks; a process that has been occurring on earth for millions of years.

Just like vitamins, our bodies do not produce minerals and therefore we need to obtain them either through foods or supplements.

## Supplements

**A supplement** is nothing more than a vitamin or mineral that has been extracted from a plant and put into a form that can be used by the body.

Over the years supplements have gotten a bad rap because they have been confused with illegal performance enhancing drugs. Supplements **ARE NOT** drugs they are (usually) pills that are created in a laboratory. This can be good and bad.

The downside to nutritional supplements not being drugs is that the manufacturers of these products are not regulated (in the U.S.) by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Therefore there are a lot of mislabeled and misleading products on the market claiming to do things they just can't do.

The positive side is that supplements are easy to obtain and use. You do not need a prescription, although you should always consult a medical professional before taking any type of supplement.

Here's a tip... Although supplement manufacturers are not regulated by the FDA, many of them do

adhere to the FDA's rigorous manufacturing standards called Good Manufacturing Practices or GMP's. When selecting a supplement always make sure that the company voluntarily manufactures according to GMP.

## Antioxidants

**A quick word on antioxidants.** These are specific vitamins or minerals that protect the body from the damaging effects of our environment such as pollution, harmful sunlight, stress, or over exertion.

Antioxidants are one of the keys to good health. An in depth discussion of them is beyond the scope of this mini e-book. For more information on antioxidants please visit my website at:

[www.BodyBuildingIsForEverybody.com/antioxidants.html](http://www.BodyBuildingIsForEverybody.com/antioxidants.html)

## How are They Used?

**Vitamins, minerals or supplements** enter your body and go first to your stomach and then to your intestines. While in your intestines your body determines how they will be allocated. Your body

knows where the vitamins and minerals are needed the most and sends them there.

If there is not enough to go around your body will take vitamins and minerals away from other less important areas and send them to the critical spot.

The two key points I want to stress here are that (1) if you lack the proper amount of vitamins and minerals or supplementation some part of your body will suffer because there will not be enough to go around.

(2) Vitamins and minerals are naturally found in singular form (ex: Vitamin A, Vitamin C, Iron) but they must work together in proper balance in order to be effective. If one vitamin or mineral is missing it throws the whole system out of whack.

In a perfect or near perfect world (like it was thousands of years ago) we were able to get the proper nutritional balance from the foods we ate; but no more!

Our modern day diet is so far removed from what our long-ago ancestors ate. We therefore need to balance out our diets with a good quality GMP manufactured supplement.

# What Happens After They do Their Job?

**Ideally, vitamins, minerals and supplements** are used up doing their job in your body. They do what they're supposed to do and just melt away. But this is not always the case and it can lead to major problems.

Here are two key points to understand:

Certain lifestyle habits such as drinking alcohol in excess, drinking coffee, tea, or sodas in excess, or taking drugs can literally wash away nutrients before they have been used by the body. And as we've seen, throwing your nutrient system off balance can lead to major health problems.

The second point is that supplements that are manufactured in such a way that are hard to dissolve in the body are completely useless. The technical term for how well something dissolves in your body is "bioavailability". If it takes too long for a pill to be dissolved by your body, its contents, when they finally do dissolve, are of no use to you.

When you hear people talk about "expensive urine" they are referring to supplements that did not do their job and were washed out when you went to the bathroom; again leading to major health problems.

# Conclusion

**Vitamins, minerals or supplements** are vital nutrients for your overall health and for disease prevention. In a recent 26,000 person study by the American Medical Association (AMA) it was concluded that not one person was getting the Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) of vitamins and minerals. This might not be so bad if it weren't for the fact that 96% of the U.S. population dies from a disease of some sort. I wonder what the statistic would be if more of use were "taking our vitamins"!

Hey, we're all going to die at some point. But for those of us that die from natural causes I think the major question is how do we look and feel for those last 40 or 50 years?

A famous microbiologist and current business partner of mine once said:

*"People are living too short and dying too long!"*

I couldn't agree with him more! So take your vitamins!

To your health and wellbeing,  
Del Lewis