



DO I REALLY NEED TO TAKE VITAMINS?

The Question Answered Once and For All

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It should be easy. Either you need vitamins or you don't. Yet while billions are spent on vitamins and nutritional supplements every year, others firmly believe they can get everything from their diet and even others believe that vitamins are nothing but "expensive urine".

These are, of course, all beliefs. But what if I told you I could answer the question, once and for all? Not simply my opinion, but on a rational, logical flow chart approach to answering the question.

Do I need vitamins?

To answer this question, we need to know what a vitamin is and what it does. Do you? Most don't.

"Vitamin" - an organic compound that can be transformed in the body into a coenzyme which aids in specific chemical reactions in the cells and tissues.

Thus, they are essential for physiological function.

So the answer is simple. You do need vitamins because they are essential for physiological function. But of course it isn't that easy because when we ask the question "Do we need vitamins?" what we are really asking is "Do we need them in a pill form?" So the real question is not do I need vitamins (you do) but rather;

Do I need vitamin supplementation?

I did say that it was a logical flow chart approach, so to answer this question I must, in fact, ask and answer another question;

Can I get everything I need from a balanced diet?

This can only be answered by asking:

What do I need?

This of course brings us to a key part of the question and a discussion of "RDAs" versus optimum health. Is your belief that RDAs are sufficient for health or do you strive for optimal health and what exactly is the difference? To begin to answer this, we must ask our next question;

What is an RDA?

Believe it or not, far too many people believe that these are numbers derived at some scientific high level meeting held by the government with your best interests at heart that will give you all the health you need. The truth is that an RDA is;

RDA (Recommended Daily Allowance)
“The amount of a vitamin necessary to prevent a disease deficiency.”

What does that mean? It means that the RDA for vitamin C is how much vitamin C you need so that you don't get the disease that's caused by a lack of vitamin C. What disease is that? Scurvy! The RDA for vitamin D is how much vitamin D you need so that you don't get rickets! (Rickets is a significant “softening” of the bones.) This of course begs the real question;

Is this your health goal?

If your desired level of nutrition and vitamin intake (whether through diet and/or supplementation) is simply to avoid scurvy, rickets and other deficiency diseases, then meeting RDA levels would be sufficient to accomplish such a goal. Please be aware, however, that this has nothing to do with optimum health or the health continuum and is in fact a major contributor to why we have so many unhealthy people on this planet.

Is your health goal simply to avoid scurvy?

If your health goal is optimum health, there are thousands of scientific studies that confirm the role of supplementation in helping you achieve this and how vitamin levels well above RDA levels are necessary.

It is interesting to note that there is the occasional study that is anti-vitamin and even more interesting to note that the anti-vitamin person will rely on the one negative study to justify their position while ignoring the 100 positive ones.

A classic example was the beta-carotene study from years ago that is still perpetuated by some so called health “experts”. The newspaper headlines essentially said that beta-carotene supplementation actually caused lung cancer. The truth? A group of high risk patients for lung cancer (people who had smoked 1-2 packs a day for 20 to 40 years) were given the same beta-carotene found in 2 medium sized carrots over the course of a month or two and the study concluded that it was the beta-carotene that caused the cancer.

Back to our flow chart of questions in discussing RDAs versus optimum health one must now ask;

Can I get these (RDA or optimum health) levels from diet alone?

You would think the common sense thing to do would be to investigate this question, so that's exactly what I did. I went to Canada's Food Guide and took a **random sampling** to comprise my meals. For instance if it said to have X servings of a food group and there were X number of pictures in the guide, I took one of each. I then calculated the actual nutrients I would get from those meals. The results?

A random selection of Canada's Food Guide for the following nutrients for the average adult

Vitamin A	Vitamin B6	Calcium
Vitamin B1	Vitamin B12	Magnesium
Vitamin B2	Vitamin C	Iron
Vitamin B3	Vitamin D	Zinc
Vitamin B5	Vitamin E	

Which ones achieved an "optimal health level"?

Not a single vitamin obtained an optimum level (as determined by a consensus of multiple scientific studies)! Hence, the answer is simple.

If your goal is to achieve optimum health and optimum levels of nutrition you must supplement.

Please remember that the word is supplement, which means vitamin products in addition to good meals.

But what if you're really stubborn and stuck in your old sick care paradigms? As inadequate as RDAs are, how many people actually meet RDA levels?

***Youngsters' Diets Found Inadequate
-The Associated Press-***

"Hold the chips and pass the broccoli! Only 1 percent of Americans ages 2 to 19 met all government guidelines for a healthy diet, a study has found.

Of course the next question is:

Did Canada's Food Guide meet all RDA levels?

Believe it or not our random sampling found that following Canada's Food Guide did not even meet RDA levels for vitamin E, B5 and B12.

Please note that Canada's Food Guide also did not originate at that high level meeting with your best interests at heart, rather, it originated during World War II as a food rationing program.

Hence, while it is a nice belief that you get everything you need from your meals it's just not true 99.9% of the time. There are numerous factors which affect nutrient quality such as pollution, pesticides, soil quality, food contaminants, processing and cooking methods.

There are also factors which affect your vitamin requirements which are physiological stress, psychological stress, infection, exercise, alcohol and poor nutrient density.

How many people fit into the above categories?

What about those who believe God never intended us to take vitamin supplementation or that Mother Nature provides everything that we need? I

could simply tell you it's an unhealthy belief but the reason I bring it up here is that you **were** right, except you were right some 10,000 years ago. As best as can be accurately determined, it is estimated that man did achieve optimal levels from what we ate 10,000 years ago. So God and Mother Nature did intend us to eat healthy, we just went out of our way to screw it up.

What about the people who think vitamin supplementation results in "expensive urine"? They're lacking the B vitamins they need for normal brain function. That's like saying water has no purpose since it just comes out as urine. Again, it is easier for them to have a belief that the vitamin takers must be wrong and wasting their money than it is for them to accept that they're not interested or willing to invest in their health.

Poor nutrition or more precisely a lack of optimum nutrition is involved in every degenerative disease known to mankind. Beyond helping to prevent disease, optimal nutrition is essential for optimal health. **Once and for all, do you need vitamin supplementation? The answer is absolutely yes!**

Do I need vitamins?



Do I need vitamin supplementation?



Can I get everything I need from a balanced diet?



What do I need?



RDA vs. Optimal Health (Which is your goal?)



Can I get this from my diet?



Almost always NO.



Once and for all, do you need vitamin supplementation?



The answer is absolutely YES!

For more information please contact Dr. Zielonka at (613) 688-1036 or visit our website at www.excellenceinhealth.com or www.healthandwellnesscanada.com