

Answers

at *Walgreens*[®]

vitamins and supplements



Answers about vitamins and supplements begin here.

The best way to get the daily requirement of essential vitamins is to eat a balanced diet that contains a variety of foods. In addition to eating well, vitamins and supplements may help ensure your body gets all the nutrients it needs. Because these needs vary depending on age, gender and other factors, such as pregnancy, Walgreens created this helpful guide to vitamins and supplements.

Contents

Hair, skin and nails	Page 3
Bones and joints	Page 10
Cognitive.....	Page 14
Eye health	Page 17
Digestive	Page 21
Heart.....	Page 24
Immune.....	Page 28
Prenatal.....	Page 32
Kids.....	Page 36



How can I keep my hair, skin and nails healthy?

We often appreciate beauty based on outer appearances, but beauty also happens on the inside. Vitamins, minerals and other key nutrients play an important role in maintaining healthy hair, skin and nails—the outward representation of our beauty within.¹

A healthy diet that includes water, lean proteins, whole grains, fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy products and healthy fats (from nuts, vegetable oils and fatty fish) provides essential nutrients for overall health and beauty.

In addition, a daily multivitamin/mineral supplement provides essential nutrients for healthy skin and hair. Essential nutrients are those the body needs but can't produce enough of on its own, so they have to come from food/supplements.²



How can I help my skin stay young?

Alpha-lipoic acid (ALA)

ALA is an antioxidant that may help improve the look and feel of aging skin when applied to the skin in a cream.³

Antioxidants

Antioxidants such as vitamins C, E and beta-carotene, and the mineral selenium, help protect skin from aging prematurely. Vitamin C is a key nutrient when it comes to skin health. Not only is it a strong antioxidant that can help prevent damage from prolonged sun exposure, it is also a key ingredient in collagen—an important compound naturally found in the skin that helps maintain the elasticity and integrity of the skin. Be sure to include vitamin C-rich foods, such as citrus fruits and strawberries, in your diet.

Taking vitamin E can also reduce damage from the sun and wrinkles and can improve skin texture. In addition, people who take vitamins C and E in the long run reduce the damage from sunburn.⁴

Green tea

Green tea is an excellent source of antioxidants. These may play a beneficial role in maintaining healthy skin, even in the presence of UV light from the sun.³



be *i*nformed

Please consult with your healthcare provider before beginning any dietary supplement program, or for specific concerns regarding your health condition or prescription medication.⁵

Omega-3 fatty acids

Omega-3 fatty acids may help keep your skin smoother and younger-looking.⁶ Fatty fish, like salmon, tuna, mackerel and sardines, are great sources of omega-3 fatty acids. Other foods, such as flax, flaxseed oil, walnuts, olive oil and canola oil, contain ALA, which the body converts into omega-3.⁷ Nutrients, like beta-carotene and selenium, play a role in skin health, as well.⁸

Vitamin D

Many people are able to make enough vitamin D by exposing their face, arms and hands to 10–15 minutes of sunshine, three times a week, without the protection of sunscreen.⁹ Unfortunately, the use of sunscreen can interfere with the skin's ability to make vitamin D—a critical nutrient involved in bone health and reducing inflammation.¹⁰ It's also possible to get a moderate amount of vitamin D from foods like salmon, tuna and fortified milk.¹¹ For the many people who don't get enough vitamin D through their diet, taking a daily vitamin D supplement may be recommended.

Vitamin E

Vitamin E is a crucial antioxidant nutrient that helps protect and maintain the integrity of all cells, including skin cells. As a result, getting enough vitamin E in your diet helps promote the health of your skin and cells. Vitamin E is found in nuts, seeds, vegetable oils and green vegetables.¹²

Zinc

Zinc may be effective in helping to control acne.¹³ Zinc is found in red meat, poultry, beans, nuts and whole-grain foods.¹⁴



How can I have healthier hair and nails?

Protein in your diet helps promote healthy hair.¹⁵ Nothing can make your nails grow faster, but aging and problems that affect blood circulation can slow their growth.¹⁶ To prevent dry nails, rub unpolished nails with a moisturizer several times throughout the day and at bedtime. Wear cotton gloves to bed to hold in the moisturizer.¹⁷

Iron

Hair loss or shedding may be a result of not getting enough iron. A blood test at your healthcare provider's office can show if you are lacking in iron. If you are, your provider is likely to suggest an iron supplement.¹⁸

Omega-3

Omega-3 fatty acids found in some fish oils can help support healthy skin and scalp and can protect against dry scalp and hair, which gives hair a dull look.¹⁹ Also, dandruff is often linked to dry skin, so an omega 3 fatty acid supplement and a multivitamin may be helpful.²⁰

Omega-6 fatty acids

Linoleic acid is an omega-6 fatty acid the body uses to make anti-inflammatory agents. It is found in evening primrose oil, black currant oil and borage oil supplements.²¹

Vitamin B

If you don't get enough B vitamins in your diet, a B-complex or super B-complex supplement may help nourish your hair. Biotin, a B-complex vitamin, can help nails that split, break and peel. Try eating more biotin-rich foods, such as nuts, eggs, salmon, chicken, wheat germ, whole-grain cereals and breads, dairy products and Swiss chard. If your nails are still brittle, speak to your healthcare provider about whether you should take a supplement.²²

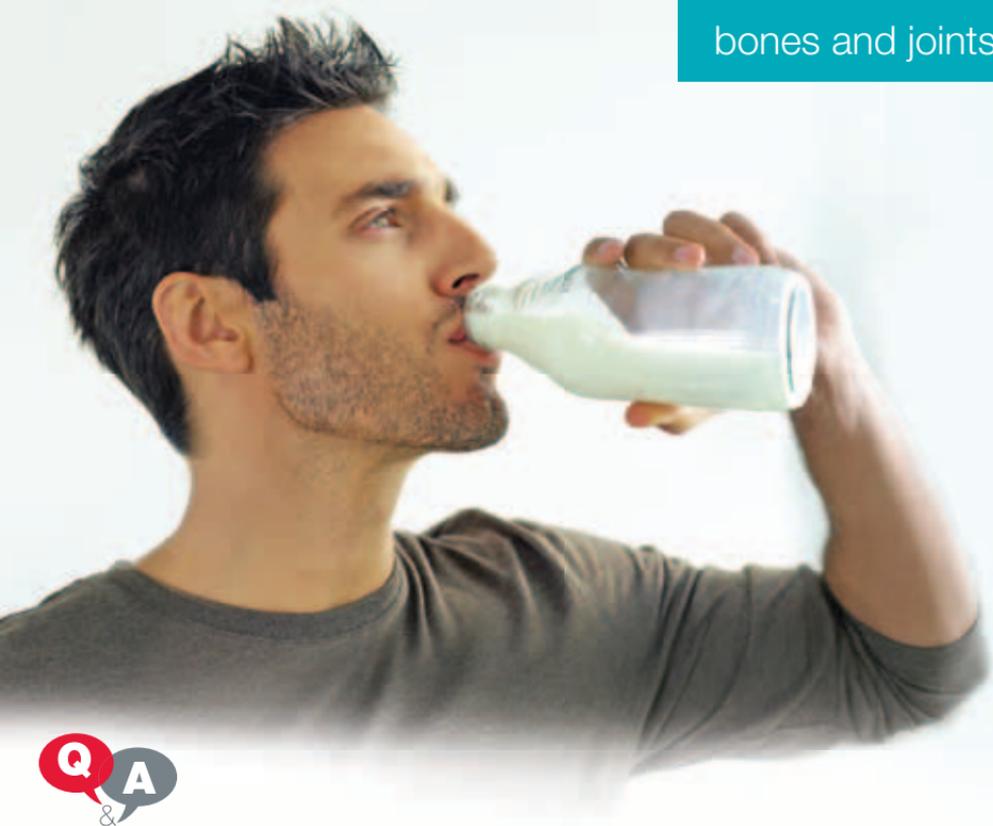
Zinc

Zinc is a powerful antioxidant, and if you don't get enough in your diet, it may lead to hair shedding.²³

Nutrients for your skin, hair & nails

Nutrient	Suggested Use
Alpha lipoic acid	20–50 mg per day ²⁴
Biotin (vitamin B)	30 mcg per day ²²
Green tea	2–3 cups per day ²⁵
Omega-3 fatty acids	500 mg of EPA/DHA per day or two servings of fish per week (Higher amounts may be taken under a healthcare provider's supervision). ²⁶
Omega-6 fatty acids	Linoleic Acid (Rich source of Omega-6 Fatty Acids) 3–5 g/day. Ask your healthcare provider for dosage guidance. ²⁷
Vitamin D	600–4,000 IU per day for adults ⁹
Vitamin E	15–1,500 IU per day (from supplements or fortified foods). ²⁸





How do I maintain healthy bones and joints?

Two nutrients in particular—calcium and vitamin D—are needed for strong bones. If you find it hard to reach your daily calcium goal—despite drinking milk and calcium-fortified juice, or eating yogurt and cheese—it may be time to think about calcium supplements.

Calcium

Calcium combines with Vitamin D to absorb calcium, so it's important to get enough. If you drink milk and take a daily

multivitamin and mineral supplement, you'll likely get enough Vitamin D. Calcium supplements can interact with some prescription and over-the-counter medications.²⁹ Calcium also interferes with the absorption of iron. However, you can avoid this by taking your iron and calcium supplements at different meals.³⁰ Ask your provider about the best time to take your calcium supplement.

Vitamin D

You can get vitamin D in three ways: in your skin, from your diet and from supplements. Some experts say it's not safe to spend any time in the sun, while others believe you should spend 10–15 minutes in the sun, three times a week, to help your body produce the vitamin D you need. You can also get vitamin D from egg yolks, beef liver, fatty fish (such as mackerel, salmon and tuna), cod liver oil and fortified products (such as milk, cheese, orange juice, cereals and soy milk).³¹

My joints feel worn out and painful. How can I improve my mobility?

Glucosamine, chondroitin sulfate and SAME may help improve joint health. When combined, glucosamine and chondroitin sulfate help slow the breakdown of cartilage between joint bones. The greatest improvement was seen in people with moderate to severe knee pain.

Glucosamine and Chondroitin

Glucosamine is a basic building block for maintaining joint cartilage and the structure of your joints. It also helps promote overall elasticity, flexibility and mobility of the joints. Glucosamine may be effective in promoting joint comfort and improved functionality.³²

Chondroitin

Chondroitin works with glucosamine when it comes to improving joint health. It is a nutrient found in the connective tissue of the body that helps maintain the structure and function of joint cartilage. Chondroitin lubricates and cushions the joints by creating a shock-absorbing space within the cartilage tissues. Not only does this action provide cushioning support, but it also helps protect cartilage from being broken down by enzymes. If you have moderate-to-severe joint pain, ask your healthcare provider if a combined chondroitin and glucosamine supplement is right for you.³³

Hyaluronic acid

Hyaluronic acid provides lubrication and cushioning for the joints. The eyes and joints contain the largest amounts.³⁴

Magnesium

Nearly 50 percent of the body's supply of magnesium is found in bone. Magnesium helps bones stay strong.³⁵

Multivitamins

A daily multivitamin fills the vitamin and mineral gaps in your diet. A daily multivitamin may be sufficient for some people, but for others, a multivitamin may lack a needed nutrient or may not provide enough of a nutrient. In such cases, extra supplements may be necessary.³⁶

Omega-3s

The most important omega-3 fatty acids for your joints are EPA and DHA. Aim for at least two weekly servings of fatty fish, like salmon, halibut, tuna and sardines.³⁷ If you don't eat much fish, taking a fish oil supplement may help.³⁸

SAMe

The benefits of SAMe are commonly associated with brain health and mood, but SAMe can also play a role in joint health. SAMe may contribute to the growth and repair of cartilage. Healthy cartilage protects your joints and helps maintain joint comfort.³⁹ Make sure your SAMe supplement is enteric-coated, which allows it to travel through the stomach to the small intestine where it is absorbed.⁴⁰

Nutrients for your bones and joints

Nutrient	Suggested Use
Calcium and vitamin D	Calcium: 1,000 mg per day for adult men and 1,000–1,200 mg for adult women. ^{41, 67} Vitamin D: 600 IU per day for adults ⁴²
Chondroitin	400 mg three times per day or 600 mg twice per day ⁴³
Glucosamine	1,500 mg per day or 500 mg three times per day ⁴⁴
Magnesium	420 mg per day for men and 320 mg for women ³⁵
Omega-3 fatty acids	500 mg of EPA/DHA per day. Higher amounts may be taken under a doctor's supervision, especially if deficiency is present. ⁴⁵
SAMe	600–1,200 mg per day, divided into three doses. Ask your healthcare provider for dosing advice. ⁴⁶



How do I promote the health of my brain as I get older?

As the control center of your body, the brain manages everything that keeps your body functioning at its best. Most people can expect to have some degree of normal age-related cognitive decline as they get older, which can affect the ability to concentrate, memorize, reason and process information. The following supplements have various roles in brain development and function throughout various life stages.

Acetyl-L-Carnitine

Helps sharpen memory and may be particularly beneficial in age-related memory loss.⁴⁷

B vitamins

Help maintain mood-lifting chemicals in the brain. Low levels of vitamins B12, B6 and folate may be related to depression.⁴⁸

Choline

This is involved in muscle control, memory and many other functions. It's also part of cell membranes and helps cells communicate with one another. Although the body can make choline, most people need additional choline from food sources, such as egg yolks, beef, soy milk, tofu, quinoa and broccoli.⁴⁹

Multivitamins

They can improve your health by filling the vitamin and mineral gaps that may exist in your diet.³⁶

Omega-3s

The most important omega-3 fatty acid for brain health is DHA. It's important for brain development and function.⁵⁰ Fatty fish, like salmon, anchovies, sardines and halibut, are excellent food sources of DHA.⁵¹ Most don't get enough of these fish in their usual diet, so a fish oil supplement can be beneficial.

SAMe

SAMe is best known for enhancing mood by promoting a healthy balance of brain neurotransmitters. Taking a SAMe supplement can be beneficial for overall brain health and for mood concerns.⁵²

Vitamin D

This is important for healthy brain function and development. In addition, research suggests that low vitamin D levels may be correlated with low performance on cognitive tests.⁵³

Nutrients for brain health

Nutrient	Suggested Use
Acetyl-L-Carnitine	Supplement doses usually range from 1,500–2,000 mg per day ⁴⁷
Antioxidant vitamins: C and E B vitamins: folic acid and vitamin B12 Choline	Vitamin C: 75 mg per day for adult women; 90 mg per day for adult men, not exceeding 2,000 mg per day ⁵⁴ Vitamin E: 400–1,500 IU per day ⁵⁵ 200–500 mcg per day ⁵⁶ 2.4 mcg per day ⁵⁷ 425 mg per day for women and 550 mg per day for men ⁴⁹
N-Acetyl-L-Cysteine	Supplement doses usually range from 250–1,500 mg per day ⁵⁸
Omega-3 fatty acids EPA and DHA SAMe	500 mg of EPA/DHA per day for healthy people ⁴⁵ 200–1,600 mg per day ³⁹
Vitamin D	600 IU per day for adults ⁵⁹



How can I take care of my eyes?

Millions of Americans aged 40 and older have eye-related problems such as cataracts and glaucoma. Many 50 years and older also develop age-related macular degeneration.⁶⁰ Our eyes require several specific nutrients. Unfortunately, many people don't get them in adequate amounts from their diets. Learn about several of these important nutrients, what they do and how you can increase your intake.

Lutein and zeaxanthin

Lutein and zeaxanthin, two powerful antioxidants, help protect your eyes from the damaging ultraviolet rays of the sun. They also help you see in low light. People who eat lutein- and zeaxanthin-rich foods, such as kale, broccoli, spinach, collard greens, carrots and artichokes, may lower their risk of cataracts by up to 50%.⁶¹

Omega-3 fatty acids

Early studies show that omega-3 fatty acids may help protect individuals from developing retinopathy, the deterioration of the retina. Omega-3 fatty acids may also protect against age-related macular degeneration and dry eye. Dietary sources of omega-3 fatty acids include fatty fish (such as tuna, salmon, mackerel and herring), vegetable oils, walnuts and flaxseed. Omega-3 fatty acids can also be found in some green vegetables, such as kale, Brussels sprouts, spinach and salad greens.⁶²

Vitamin C

Several studies show that Vitamin C may help slow the development of cataracts and age-related macular degeneration. Vitamin C-rich foods include citrus fruits, spinach, tomatoes, bananas, apples and peaches. A minimum intake of 300 mg/day of vitamin C may help fight cataracts. A recent study showed that 500 mg/day of vitamin C, when taken with beta-carotene, zinc and vitamin E slowed the development of advanced age-related macular degeneration by close to 25%.⁶³

Vitamin E

Studies have shown that this powerful antioxidant may help slow down the development of cataracts and age-related macular degeneration. Four hundred IU/day of vitamin E, when taken with beta-carotene, zinc and vitamin C supplements, can slow the development of advanced age-related macular degeneration by about 25% in people who are at high risk for this condition. Food sources of this fat-soluble vitamin include nuts, spinach, safflower oil, pumpkin, peanut butter and fortified cereals. The Recommended Dietary Allowance for vitamin E for adults is 22 IU of vitamin E each day. Do not take large amounts of vitamin E if you take supplements or medicines that thin your blood.^{64,65}

Zinc

Zinc is another key nutrient for eye health. Those who don't have enough zinc may have difficulty seeing at night and may develop cataracts. A recent study found that people who take vitamin E, vitamin C and 40–80 mg/day of zinc may slow the development of advanced age-related macular degeneration by close to 25%. Food sources of zinc include beef, seafood, pork, yogurt, eggs, milk and enriched cereals. It's best to meet your zinc requirements with food, as zinc supplements can interfere with the body's ability to absorb copper. If you take a zinc supplement, experts strongly recommend that you also take 2 mg/day of copper.⁶⁶

Be proactive by adding these nutrients to your daily diet. Speak to your Walgreens pharmacist for additional information about these and other eye health supplements.

Nutrients for eye health

Nutrient	Suggested Use
Lutein and Zeaxanthin	10 mg per day of lutein and 2 mg per day of zeaxanthin or as directed by your healthcare provider ⁶¹
Omega-3 fatty acids	500 mg of EPA/DHA per day for healthy people ⁴⁵
Vitamin C	90 mg per day for men and 75 mg per day for women or as directed by your healthcare provider ⁶³
Vitamin E	22 IU per day ⁶⁴
Zinc	40–80 mg per day. Some newer studies recommend even higher levels. Discuss your needs with your healthcare provider. ⁶⁶

be *i*nformed

Please consult with your healthcare provider before beginning any dietary supplement program, or for specific concerns regarding your health condition or prescription medication.⁵



What nutrients are important for good digestive health?

Healthy digestion is key when it comes to keeping your body well. During digestion, the body breaks down, absorbs and transports nutrients for the body to use in all of its functions. In addition, proper digestive health is involved in preventing toxins and harmful waste products from building up in the body.⁶⁸ You can keep your digestive system healthy by eating well, drinking enough water and getting regular physical activity. In addition, certain nutritional supplements can also help promote good intestinal health and digestion.⁶⁹

Multivitamins

Digestive concerns, such as inflammatory bowel conditions, lactose intolerance and gluten sensitivity, may lead to low levels of certain nutrients. People with these conditions may have issues with absorption or they may avoid certain foods. For example, people who cannot tolerate dairy products usually need to find other sources of calcium, since milk is a primary food source of this important bone-building mineral.⁷⁰ A multivitamin/mineral supplement can help you get the nutrients you need if you have digestive issues. You may need other vitamin and mineral supplements, depending on your condition. Talk with your healthcare professional about the right ones for you, if you have any of these conditions.³⁶

Prebiotics

Prebiotics promote the growth of the beneficial probiotic bacteria in the intestinal tract and contribute to the health of the intestinal system. Prebiotics are naturally found in foods such as honey, whole grains, bananas, garlic, onions and artichokes. They help promote the growth of friendly bacteria. Prebiotic supplements are also available.⁷¹

Probiotics

The gastrointestinal (GI) tract contains hundreds of different types of helpful bacteria that help keep the body well-balanced. Illness and different medications, like antibiotics, can harm this delicate balance and cause gastrointestinal problems like diarrhea. Probiotics, such as acidophilus, are beneficial organisms in the body that push out problem-causing bacteria and strengthen the body's immune system. They are illness-fighting superheroes.⁷²

Yogurt and fermented foods, like miso and tempeh, contain naturally occurring live bacteria. If these items aren't a part of your regular diet, dietary supplements with live probiotics are another great way to restore and maintain a healthy intestinal environment and promote digestive health. There are many different strains of probiotics, so check with your pharmacist about the one that's best for you.⁷³

Vitamin D

Low levels of vitamin D may correlate to the risk of colon-related health concerns.⁷⁴ You can make sure you have enough vitamin D by eating fortified foods, taking nutritional supplements and enjoying safe sun exposure. A daily vitamin D supplement can be a great way to promote optimal intestinal health.⁷⁵

Nutrients for digestive health

Nutrient	Suggested Use
Prebiotic	Follow the label instructions and talk with your doctor about incorporating prebiotic ingredients with your diet—particularly when following a probiotic regimen. ⁷¹
Probiotic	Follow the label instructions and talk to your doctor about the probiotic that is right for you. ⁷²
Vitamin D	600 IU per day for adults ⁹



How can I take care of my heart?

The heart delivers oxygen to the muscles and transports essential nutrients in the blood to the cells.⁷⁶ If the heart is damaged, it can't carry out these important functions.⁷⁷ Regular physical activity, managing your weight and eating a healthy diet are factors you can control when promoting a healthy heart. Following an ideal diet can be a challenge, so dietary supplements may help you get the nutrition you need.⁷⁸

What supplements can help my heart?

Antioxidants

Taking vitamins C and E may reduce your heart disease risk. It is best to eat a diet high in vitamin C, with foods like citrus fruits, strawberries, tomatoes and peppers, and vitamin E, which includes green leafy vegetables, nuts and vegetable oils.^{80,81} Walgreens stocks a variety of vitamin E supplements in different strengths.

Aspirin

People who are at high risk for a heart attack or have already had a heart attack may find it helpful to take a daily low dose of aspirin. This can help prevent blood clots. Ask your healthcare provider if taking aspirin is right for you.⁸²

Coenzyme CoQ10

Also known as CoQ10, this is a natural antioxidant made in the heart, pancreas and kidneys. It helps cells produce energy and keeps the heart healthy. If a person has already had a heart attack, CoQ10 can help prevent future heart problems from developing.⁸³ Some heart medicines, such as statins, interfere with the production of CoQ10.⁸⁴ Heart disease can also lower the body's level of this helpful coenzyme. The best way to maintain a healthy level of CoQ10 in your body is to take a supplement.

Multivitamin and mineral supplements

These can help you get the right amounts of vitamins and minerals each day, if you can't get them through your diet.³⁶



Niacin

This may help some people lower their LDL (bad) cholesterol and triglyceride levels while raising HDL (good) cholesterol levels.⁸⁵ If you take cholesterol-lowering drugs, you should not take niacin unless your healthcare provider recommends this, as it may cause flushing or hot flashes.⁸⁶

Omega-3s

Fatty fish, such as salmon, mackerel, lake trout, herring, sardines and tuna, contain heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids.⁸⁷ Flaxseed and flaxseed oil also contain ALA, which the body converts into Omega-3 fatty acids. These may help reduce triglyceride levels and improve HDL levels.⁸⁸

Plant sterols and plant stanols

These natural substances that help lower LDL (bad) cholesterol. They are found in many fruits, vegetables, beans, nuts, seeds and vegetable oils, as well as in some margarines, orange juice and supplements.⁸⁹

Nutrients for heart health

Nutrient	Suggested Use
Vitamins C and E	Vitamin C: 90 mg per day for men and 75 mg per day for women ⁶³ Vitamin E: 22 IU per day ⁶⁴
CoQ10	50–1,200 mg per day for adults ⁸³
Omega-3 fatty acids	500 mg of EPA/DHA per day for healthy people 1,000 mg and per day for people with heart disease or as directed by your healthcare provider ⁴⁵
Plant sterols and stanols	2 g per day ⁸⁹
Vitamin D	600 IU per day for adults ⁹

be *i*nformed

Please consult with your healthcare provider before beginning any dietary supplement program, or for specific concerns regarding your health condition or prescription medication.⁵



How does my immune system work?

The immune system's job is to fight off invaders and protect you against infections and illness.⁹⁰ One of its main jobs is to recognize free radicals and eliminate them. Antioxidants fight free radicals, which are unstable molecules that cause damage to cells. Our bodies produce free radicals during normal cell metabolism, injury or when exposed to environmental triggers, such as tobacco smoke, sunlight and X-rays.⁹¹ Many experts believe that free radicals may cause illness. Examples of antioxidants include vitamins A, C and E, beta-carotene, lutein, lycopene and the mineral selenium.⁹²

What supplements may help support a healthy immune system?

Echinacea

Echinacea may work along with the body's immune system to help keep you healthy. Echinacea may help reduce the symptoms and duration of colds and flu-like illnesses by quickly stimulating the body's immune system. Newer studies show that echinacea works best when taken to prevent colds and flu. It can also be taken when symptoms first appear and then for seven to 10 days. It is not recommended for long-term use. If you want to try this for your child, you should first talk to your pediatrician or pharmacist to make sure it is not dangerous and will not conflict with any traditional care your child receives.⁹³

Multivitamins

A daily multivitamin helps fill the vitamin and mineral gaps in your diet. For some, a multivitamin may lack a needed nutrient or may not provide enough of a nutrient. In such cases, additional supplements may be recommended by your healthcare provider or pharmacist.³⁶

Vitamin C

These may help reduce the symptoms and duration of a cold when taken routinely throughout the cold season. It is safe when used in moderate amounts, but too much can cause diarrhea and other GI discomfort.⁸⁰

Vitamin A promotes a healthy immune system. It also helps prevent eye problems, is essential for the growth and development of cells and keeps skin healthy.⁹⁴

Vitamin E

Vitamin E plays an important role in the upkeep of a healthy immune system. It also protects against free-radical damage.⁸¹ Environmental pollution, the sun's ultraviolet rays, cigarette smoke and certain health conditions can all trigger free-radical damage in our bodies.⁹⁵

Zinc

Zinc helps your body carry out its normal immune response when invaders attack. Zinc is also involved in your body's growth and development, nervous system function, antioxidant activity and reproduction. Too much, however, can prevent your immune system from working properly.⁹⁶



Nutrients for immune health

Nutrient	Suggested Use
Echinacea	300 mg standardized, powdered extract (4% phenolics), three times per day until your condition improves. Don't take for more than 7–10 days. ⁹³
Vitamin C	90 mg per day for men 75 mg per day for women. ⁶³
Vitamin D	600 IU per day Higher amounts may be taken under a doctor's supervision, ⁹ especially if deficiency is present.
Vitamin E	22 IU per day ⁶⁴
Zinc	15–25 mg per day ⁹⁶



be *i*nformed

Please consult with your healthcare provider before beginning any dietary supplement program, or for specific concerns regarding your health condition or prescription medication.⁵



How can I prepare for pregnancy?

If you are pregnant or are hoping to conceive, it is important to receive prenatal care by seeing your healthcare provider regularly. A healthful, balanced diet that includes plenty of whole fruits and vegetables, whole grain products, lean protein and healthy fats will help ensure good health for you and your baby throughout your pregnancy. The dietary choices you make during this time will have a powerful effect on your baby.⁹⁷

Calcium

Calcium helps the mother maintain strong bones and promotes healthy fetal bone development. Calcium also helps circulatory, muscular and nervous systems to function normally.⁹⁸

Fatty fish

While fatty fish are the best dietary sources of omega-3 fatty acids, women of child-bearing age and pregnant women should avoid certain fish that may have a high mercury content, which can affect the development of the baby's nervous system. These fish include shark, swordfish, king mackerel and tilefish. Raw fish also is not recommended for pregnant women. Cooked fish is safer for pregnant women; in general, up to 12 ounces per week of cooked fish are OK. Fish oil supplements are also available to help meet the recommendations for DHA. Your healthcare provider can help you choose a safe omega-3 supplement during pregnancy and lactation.⁹⁹

Folic acid

Folic acid plays a critical role in the formation and development of a baby's brain and spinal cord—an important process that occurs during the initial three to four weeks of pregnancy. If you have a condition that limits your dietary intake of folic acid, you may benefit from a folic acid supplement. Talk with your healthcare provider about safe supplement use.¹⁰⁰

Iron

During pregnancy, a woman needs more iron. In fact, iron needs at this time are nearly twice those of a non pregnant woman. To get enough iron, eat iron-rich foods, such as lean meat, poultry, dried fruits and iron-fortified cereals. Prenatal vitamins and iron supplements can also help meet the high demand for iron during

pregnancy and the postpartum period. Taking a vitamin C supplement with an iron supplement or eating citrus fruits with iron-fortified cereals can be the best way to get enough iron.¹⁰¹

Omega-3s

The omega-3 fatty acid DHA is especially important because it promotes the growth and development of the baby's brain, eyes and nervous system. Mothers of breast-fed infants should be aware that the level of DHA found in breast milk varies based on the mother's diet. If you choose to breast-feed your child, make sure you have adequate DHA in your diet or take supplements.¹⁰²

Prenatal multivitamins

These nutrients are critical during pregnancy and support your needs and those of your growing baby. Pregnancy places a higher demand on the body and increases the amount of nutrients required. Getting enough essential vitamins and minerals and other key nutrients during pregnancy are vital to the development of your baby—and for your health, too.

If your prenatal vitamin pill upsets your stomach, ask your healthcare provider for an alternative option. You may find chewable or liquid vitamins easier to handle.¹⁰³

Supplemental algae

Supplemental algae oil is a fish-free way to get DHA. Also, alpha linolenic acid (ALA) found in flaxseed oil, canola oil and walnuts is an omega-3 fatty acid that is partially converted to DHA in the body.¹⁰⁴

Vitamin D

For pregnant women, getting enough vitamin D is critical for proper fetal development—especially regarding the brain and the immune system. Vitamin D also is important for keeping your bones and your baby’s bones healthy and strong. Most prenatal vitamins may not have enough vitamin D, so in addition to your prenatal vitamin, drink vitamin D-fortified low-fat milk and other calcium-rich foods that contain vitamin D.¹⁰⁵

Nutrients for prenatal health

Nutrient	Suggested Use
Prenatal multivitamins	1 per day or as directed by your healthcare provider ¹⁰⁶
Calcium	1,200 mg per day during pregnancy and lactation ⁹⁸
Folic acid	400–600 mcg per day during pregnancy; 500 mcg per day during lactation ¹⁰⁷
Iron	30 mg per day during pregnancy and lactation ¹⁰¹
Omega-3 fatty acids (DHA)	300 mg per day during pregnancy and lactation ¹⁰⁸
Vitamin D	1,000–2,000 IU daily. ¹⁰⁹ Some newer studies recommend even higher levels. Discuss your need with your healthcare provider. ¹¹⁰



How do vitamins support my child's health?

As your child grows, vitamins and minerals play a big part in building and maintaining health. They help with many important things, including bone and brain development, energy production and muscle function, as well as preventing tooth decay. However, knowing which vitamins you should give your child can be a challenge. If you're not sure about your child's nutritional and vitamin needs, talk to your pediatrician. Remember to keep vitamins out of the reach of children.¹¹

What are some important nutrients found in children's multivitamins?

Fruits, vegetables, dairy, whole grains and lean meats are important for your child's diet, as is limiting sweets and sugars. But if meeting your child's nutritional needs is hard to do through foods alone, a children's multivitamin may help. Following are some of the important nutrients they contain:

Calcium

Calcium helps to strengthen bones, prevent osteoporosis later in life and improve lifelong dental health. Children can get most of their daily calcium from three cups of low-fat or fat-free milk, but they also need to eat calcium-rich foods to meet their calcium needs. Most milk is fortified with vitamin D, an important nutrient that the body needs to absorb calcium.¹¹²

Choline

Choline plays an important role in early childhood development. It helps build healthy cells and plays a role in proper brain and muscle function.¹¹⁴ Choline is found in foods such as meats, eggs, liver, fish, nuts, wheat germ and spinach.^{49, 115}

DHA

This is a good kind of fat that may be linked to brain and nerve development. It can be found naturally in fish oils and eggs. Salmon has the highest content of DHA of any fish source.¹¹⁶

Iron

Iron is an essential nutrient involved in the body's growth and development. Those most at risk for iron deficiency are infants who are not given extra iron after 6 months of age and teens once they begin menstruation.¹¹⁷

Vitamins C and D

Vitamin C is essential for healthy bones, teeth, gums and blood vessels and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends 400–600 IU per day of vitamin D for infants, children and adolescents.^{9,113}

Nutrients for kids health

Nutrient	Suggested use for kids' health
Children's multivitamins	1 per day or take as directed by pediatrician ¹¹³
Calcium	Children 700–1,000 mg per day Adolescents 1,300 mg per day ¹¹⁸
Choline	Children 1–3 years: 200 mg per day 4–8 years: 250 mg per day 9–13 years: 375 mg per day Adolescents: 14–18 years: Male: 550 mg/day Female 400 mg/day ¹¹⁹
Fluoride	As directed by a pediatrician or dentist ¹²⁰
Iron	Children 7–10 mg per day Adolescents 8–15 mg per day ¹²¹

References:

1. <http://www.webmd.com/healthy-beauty/hair-health-11/eat-hair-type?page=1>.
2. <http://www.editorsweb.org/nutrition/essential-nutrients.htm>.
3. <http://www.webmd.com/healthy-beauty/cosmetic-procedures-products-2>.
4. <http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-and-supplements/lifestyle-guide-11/beauty-skin-care-vitamins-antioxidants>.
5. <http://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/tc/dietary-supplements-topic-overview>.
6. <http://www.webmd.com/healthy-beauty/features/want-healthy-skin-feed-well>.
7. <http://www.webmd.com/healthy-aging/omega-3-fatty-acids-fact-sheet?page=3>.
8. <http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet/prevention/antioxidants>.
9. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/002405.htm>.
10. <http://www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/9-things-that-can-undermine-your-vitamin-d-level>.
11. <http://www.cancer.org/treatment/treatmentsandsideeffects/complementaryandalternativemedicine/herbsvitaminsandminerals/vitamin-d>.
12. <http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-and-supplements/lifestyle-guide-11/supplement-guide-vitamin-e>.
13. <http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-and-supplements/lifestyle-guide-11/supplement-guide-zinc>.
14. <http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-and-supplements/lifestyle-guide-11/supplement-guide-zinc?page=2>.
15. <http://www.webmd.com/skin-problems-and-treatments/hair-loss/eating-right-keep-hair-healthy>.
16. <http://www.webmd.com/skin-problems-and-treatments/tc/nail-problems-and-injuries-topic-overview>.
17. <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/nails/WO00020/NSECTIONGROUP=2>.
18. <http://www.webmd.com/skin-problems-and-treatments/hair-loss/news/20060516/hair-loss-may-be-iron-deficiency>.
19. <http://www.webmd.com/skin-problems-and-treatments/hair-loss/features/hair-loss-natural-treatments>.
20. <http://www.mayoclinic.com/print/dandruff/DS00456/METHOD=print&DSECTION=all>.
21. <http://www.umm.edu/altmed/articles/gamma-linolenic-000305.htm>.
22. <http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-and-supplements/lifestyle-guide-11/supplement-guide-biotin>.
23. http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/zinc/NS_patient-zinc/DSECTION=evidence.
24. <http://www.umm.edu/altmed/articles/alpha-lipoic-000285.htm>.
25. <http://www.umm.edu/altmed/articles/green-tea-000255.htm>.
26. <http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/Getting-Omega3-eating-plan.pdf>.
27. <http://www.med.nyu.edu/content?ChunkID=21676#P2>.
28. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/002406.htm>.
29. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/002412.htm>.
30. <http://ajcn.nutrition.org/content/68/1/3.full.pdf>.
31. <http://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/VitaminD-QuickFacts/>.
32. <http://www.mayoclinic.com/print/glucosamine/AN00619/METHOD=print>.
33. <http://orthoinfo.aaos.org/topic.cfm?topic=A00189>.
34. <http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-supplements/ingredientmono-1062-HYALURONIC%20ACID.aspx?activeIngredientId=1062&activeIngredientName=HYALURONIC%20ACID>.
35. <http://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/Magnesium-HealthProfessional/>.
36. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/meds/a682882.html>.
37. <http://www.webmd.com/healthy-aging/omega-3-fatty-acids-fact-sheet?page=2>.
38. <http://www.webmd.com/healthy-aging/omega-3-fatty-acids-fact-sheet?page=3>.
39. <http://www.umm.edu/altmed/articles/s-adenosylmethionine-000324.htm>.
40. <http://www.ect.org/selfhelp/same.html>.
41. <http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-and-supplements/lifestyle-guide-11/calcium>.
42. <http://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/VitaminD-HealthProfessional/>.
43. <http://www.umm.edu/altmed/articles/chondroitin-000293.htm>.
44. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/natural/807.html>.
45. <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/omega-3/>.
46. <http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-and-supplements/lifestyle-guide-11/supplement-guide-sam-e>.
47. <http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-supplements/ingredientmono-834-ACETYL-L-CARNITINE.aspx?activeIngredientId=834&activeIngredientName=ACETYL-L-CARNITINE>.
48. <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/vitamin-b12-and-depression/AN01543/METHOD=print>.
49. <http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-and-supplements/choline>.
50. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/10479465>.
51. <http://www.intellichealth.com/lh/lntPrint/WSIHW000/35320/35327/374556.html?d=dmthMSContent&hide=&k=basePrint>.
52. <http://www.webmd.com/depression/tc/sam-e-topic-overview>.
53. http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/vitamin-d/NS_patient-vitamin-d/DSECTION=evidence.
54. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/natural/1001.html>.
55. <http://www.umm.edu/altmed/articles/vitamin-e-000341.htm>.
56. <http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-supplements/ingredientmono-1017-FOLIC%20ACID.aspx?activeIngredientId=1017&activeIngredientName=FOLIC%20ACID>.
57. <http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-and-supplements/lifestyle-guide-11/supplement-guide-vitamin-b12>.
58. http://www.lef.org/abstracts/codex/n-acetyl-cysteine_index.htm.

59. http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/vitamin-d/NS_patient-vitamin/dSECTION=dosing.
60. <http://www.aao.org/newsroom/upload/Eye-Health-Statistics-April-2011.pdf>.
61. <http://www.webmd.com/eye-health/lutein-zeaxanthin-vision>.
62. <http://www.nih.gov/news/pr/jun2007/nei-24.htm>.
63. <http://www.aoa.org/x11814.xml>.
64. <http://www.aoa.org/x11817.xml>.
65. <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/food-sources-of-vitamin-e/>.
66. <http://www.aoa.org/x11848.xml>.
67. <http://www.webmd.com/osteoporosis/features/calcium-supplements-pills>.
68. <http://digestive.niddk.nih.gov/ddiseases/pubs/yrdd/>.
69. http://my.clevelandclinic.org/healthy_living/nutrition/hic_keeping_your_digestive_tract_healthy.aspx.
70. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/lactoseintolerance.html>.
71. <http://www.webmd.com/ibs/features/supplements-for-ibs-what-works>.
72. <http://www.webmd.com/digestive-disorders/features/what-are-probiotics>.
73. <http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-and-supplements/lifestyle-guide-11/probiotics>.
74. <http://www.webmd.com/colorectal-cancer/news/20100121/vitamin-d-may-lower-colon-cancer-risk>.
75. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/vitaminD.html>.
76. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/007459.htm>.
77. http://www.cdc.gov/HeartDisease/coronary_ad.htm.
78. <http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-and-supplements/lifestyle-guide-11/supplementing-your-heart-health-omega-3-plant-sterols>.
79. <http://www.webmd.com/heart-disease/guide/antioxidants-vitamin-e>.
80. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/002404.htm>.
81. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/vitamine.html>.
82. <http://www.webmd.com/heart-disease/aspirin-therapy>.
83. <http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-and-supplements/lifestyle-guide-11/supplement-guide-coenzymeq10-coq10>.
84. <http://www.faim.org/guestwriters/sinatraheartfailurearoundup.html>.
85. <http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-and-supplements/lifestyle-guide-11/supplement-guide-niacin?page=1>.
86. <http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-and-supplements/lifestyle-guide-11/supplement-guide-niacin?page=2>.
87. http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHealthy/NutritionCenter/HealthyDietGoals/Fish-and-Omega-3-Fatty-Acids_UCM_303248_Article.jsp.
88. <http://www.webmd.com/diet/features/what-to-know-about-omega-3s-and-fish>.
89. <http://www.webmd.com/cholesterol-management/features/low-cholesterol-diet-plant-sterols-standols>.
90. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/immunesystemanddisorders.html>.
91. <http://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/features/how-antioxidants-work1>.
92. <http://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/antioxidants-your-immune-system-super-foods-optimal-health>.
93. <http://www.umm.edu/altmed/articles/echinacea-000239.htm>.
94. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/002400.htm>.
95. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3249911/>.
96. <http://www.health.harvard.edu/flu-resource-center/how-to-boost-your-immune-system.htm>.
97. <http://www.webmd.com/baby/tc/preparing-for-a-healthy-pregnancy-topic-overview>.
98. http://my.clevelandclinic.org/healthy_living/pregnancy/hic_increasing_calcium_in_your_diet_during_pregnancy.aspx.
99. <http://www.mayoclinic.com/print/omega-3/HB00087/METHOD=print>.
100. <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/folicacid/about.html>.
101. http://my.clevelandclinic.org/healthy_living/pregnancy/hic_increasing_iron_in_your_diet_during_pregnancy.aspx.
102. <http://www.americanpregnancy.org/firstyearoflife/PEOmega3supplements.html>.
103. <http://www.webmd.com/baby/guide/prenatal-vitamins>.
104. <http://www.webmd.com/diet/omega-3s-in-fish-oil-and-supplements-whats-your-best-strategy>.
105. <http://www.webmd.com/baby/news/20120920/vitamin-d-pregnancy-babys-brain?page=2>.
106. <http://www.americanpregnancy.org/pregnancyhealth/prenatal/vittoo much.htm>.
107. <http://www.webmd.com/baby/folic-acid-and-pregnancy>.
108. <http://www.americanpregnancy.org/pregnancyhealth/omega3fishoil.html>.
109. http://www.acog.org/Resources_And_Publications/Committee_Opinions/Committee_on_Obstetric_Practice/Vitamin_D_-_Screening_and_Supplementation_During_Pregnancy.
110. <http://www.americanpregnancy.org/pregnancyhealth/PEVitaminD.html>.
111. <http://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/gradeschool/nutrition/Pages/Vitamin-Supplements-and-Children.aspx>.
112. <http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/feeding/calcium.html#>.
113. <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/multivitamins/AN01406>.
114. http://www.lef.org/magazine/mag2011/jan2011_Feed-Your-Brain_01.htm.
115. <http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-supplements/ingredientmono-436-CHOLINE.aspx?activeingredientid=436&activeingredientName=CHOLINE>.
116. <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=15823852>.
117. <http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/feeding/iron.html>.
118. <http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-and-supplements/lifestyle-guide-11/calcium>.
119. http://www.cholineinfo.org/for_individuals/what_is_choline.asp.
120. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/meds/a682727.html>.
121. <http://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/Iron-HealthProfessional/>.



Questions about which vitamins and supplements are right for you and your family?

Walgreens pharmacists can help determine the best products for your needs. Consult with one of our knowledgeable pharmacists in store or log on to **Walgreens.com/PharmacyChat** to chat with a live pharmacist anytime, day or night.



Free, faster shipping on orders over \$25
+ free returns in store or online*

*Restrictions apply. Learn more online

FIND A BIGGER SELECTION *of* A-Z

AND SO MUCH MORE ONLINE

With over 3,000 more Vitamins and Supplements on our site, you're sure to find some that are right for you. Choose from a huge selection of

- Multivitamins
- Bone and Joint Supplements
- Heart Health Supplements

and thousands of web-exclusive items you won't find in stores

Shop [Walgreens.com/Vitamins](https://www.walgreens.com/vitamins)

Need help? See a store associate for in-store ordering options

