

Do you Need a Nutrient Supplement for Healthy Aging?

It is best to eat a wide variety of healthy foods each day. Healthy choices are fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat milk products, and lean meat, poultry, or fish. Sometimes it is hard to eat healthy foods everyday, so supplements can be helpful.



You may need nutrient supplements if you do any of these:

- Eat a low-calorie, weight-loss diet or are losing weight without wanting to.
- Are eating fewer than two meals per day.
- Do not have three servings of milk products daily.
- Have a disease of your digestive track and can't absorb certain nutrients.
- Smoke, because smoking lowers vitamin C levels in the body.
- Drink three or more alcoholic beverages most days.

Tips for choosing and storing dietary supplements:

- Talk with your doctor for advice, tell them what you are taking, and do not self-prescribe.
- Buy from a trusted source, such as a local pharmacy or grocery store.
- Buy common name brands or store brands.
- Avoid buying supplements on the internet.
- Choose supplements with close to 100% of the Daily Value for most nutrients.
It is OK to exceed the Daily Value for calcium, vitamin D and vitamin B12, because older people have high needs for these nutrients.
- Check expiration dates and look for the initials "USP," which means the supplement meets certain quality standards.
- Be very cautious with "herbal" supplements. Ask your doctor for advice and tell your doctor what you are taking.
- Stop taking "herbals" before surgery, because many promote bleeding.
- Store supplements in a safe place away from children.