

# 10 SUPPLEMENTS ALL WOMEN SHOULD CONSIDER TAKING FOR GOOD HEALTH

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The human body requires certain vitamins and minerals to function optimally. A well-balanced diet can reduce or even eliminate the need for supplementation. However, supplements can be a valuable addition to a healthy diet.

**The needs of women are similar to, but not exactly the same as those of men.** It's important that women understand the RDA (recommended daily allowance) for women and follow it to the best of their ability.

**Consider these supplements to optimize your health:**

1. **Vitamin D.** Many women are deficient in this important vitamin. It's true that your skin is able to produce vitamin D in the presence of sunlight, but that might not be sufficient if you don't spend enough time outdoors on a regular basis.

- **Vitamin D has many functions, but among the most important are its roles in calcium absorption and boosting your immune system.**
- The current RDA for women under 70 is 600 IU per day. That number increases to 800 IU per day for those over 70.

2. **A multivitamin.** Ideally, all the vitamin needs of the human body would be met by the diet. However, it's not always easy to eat a balanced diet that addresses every vitamin and mineral. **A simple multivitamin can help to ensure that all of your daily requirements are met.**

3. **Calcium.** Calcium is a primary component of bones. Osteoporosis is a real threat to all women as they age.

- Women under 50 years of age require 1,000 mg per day.
- Those over 50 need 1,200 mg per day.

4. **Fiber.** Fiber aids in gut motility and may help to lower cholesterol. Certain types of fiber also serve as food for gut bacteria. A healthy diet provides plenty of fiber, but if you're not eating a healthy diet with ample fiber-rich food, a supplement can help.

- The current recommendation for women is 25 grams of fiber each day.

5. **Fish Oil.** While you can live without most dietary fats, it is necessary to consume essential fatty acids. These are most easily consumed in fatty fish or fish oil supplements.

- There is no set recommendation for essential fatty acid intake. It doesn't take much. As little as a gram a day could be sufficient. Follow the label instructions.

6. **Probiotics.** Many health issues are believed to start in the gut. **A healthy gut greatly increases the odds of having a healthy mind and body.**

- Again, follow the label instructions.

7. **Vitamin B-12.** This vitamin does a lot of things in the body, including the building of DNA and red blood cells. If you eat a lot of meat, you probably don't need a vitamin B-12 supplement. However, if you're a vegetarian or vegan, it's

likely that supplementation will be necessary.

- The Mayo Clinic recommends that all adults consume 2.4 micrograms of vitamin B-12 per day.
- Vitamin B-12 is unique in that it is water soluble, so if you take too much, it harmlessly passes in the urine. But it can also be stored in the body in relatively large quantities. This means that taking B-12 weekly or monthly is fine, provided the dose is sufficient.

8. **Iron.** Menstruating women lose blood, which contains iron. One of the primary roles of iron is oxygen transport in the blood.

- Premenopausal women are advised to consume 18 mg/day.
- Postmenopausal: 8 mg/day

9. **Melatonin.** Melatonin is a hormone that is part of the sleep process. If you sleep well, melatonin supplementation is unnecessary. On the other hand, **if you have difficulties sleeping, a melatonin supplement might help you to fall asleep and stay asleep.**

- Try 1-2 mg to start, 30 minutes before bed.
- A total of 3-4 mg can be taken if necessary.

10. **Folate.** Folate is necessary for pregnant women to prevent a certain type of birth defect. Folate has several other roles in the body, too.

- For women without risk of becoming pregnant: 400 mcg/day.

- Women with a risk of pregnancy: 800 mcg/day.

Of course, the best place to start is a talk with your physician. **Follow your doctor's advice.**

It's also important to realize that it's easy to get too much of a good thing. **Taking too much of any supplement can be much worse than not taking it at all.** Follow the directions on the label.

Become familiar with the foods that are high in the nutrients above. It's quite possible that several of the supplements listed above will be unnecessary for you if you eat a nutritious diet.