

SUPPLEMENTATION FOR HEALTH



FUELBETTER
nutrition

VITAMIN D

It is now quite widely accepted that at least 50% of the population (UK) are Vitamin D deficient. Due to our increasingly indoor lifestyles and our relatively northern latitude, we just aren't able to make enough Vitamin D through the traditional source - sunshine!

Optimal levels of Vitamin D are associated with reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and cancer, reduced incidence of depression and increased bone health and immune function.

DOSE

Ideally you should ask your GP for a blood test - this will accurately define your current level and you can be prescribed a corrective dose from there. Common corrective doses range from 5000 to 10000IU/day, with a maintenance dose (especially during the winter) of 2500IU/day being recommended from then on.



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FISH OIL

Unless you eat an awful lot of oily fish, you're probably not taking in enough Omega 3 fatty acids. Fish oil is the best source of this and is perhaps the most effective health supplement of all. Over the years it has been shown (in numerous studies) to be effective in lowering blood pressure, reducing inflammation, reducing the risk of stroke or DVT's, reducing the incidence and symptoms of depression, helping to facilitate weight loss and improving strength and hypertrophy gains.

DOSE

This is dependent on current intake of oily fish. If you eat more than 3 portions of oily fish per week, you are unlikely to need to supplement your diet. If not, a dose of between 300-1800mg/day (again depending on how often you eat oily fish) would be sufficient. Vegetarian sources can also be used, such as algae.

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PROBIOTICS

While the research base for the two supplements above is far more established and therefore reliable, this relatively new area of study has so far yielded some very positive potential findings with regards to probiotic supplementation.

Again, as with Vitamin D and Fish Oil, there seems to be a benefit with regard to strengthening the immune system, particularly post-antibiotics (in order to rebuild helpful bacterial populations) and when travelling (in terms of reducing the chances of contracting parasitic gastrointestinal infections).

DOSE

Due to the relative dearth in research, exact doses and specific bacterial strains to take are somewhat of an unknown at the moment. However, positive results have been shown from taking a multi-strain probiotic daily, incorporating at least 10 billion live cultures.

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ZINC

While it's almost impossible to completely prevent the cold virus from striking from time to time, we can try to reduce the duration you have to suffer it. Recent studies have shown that taking an acute dose of zinc from the onset of a cold onwards can help to reduce its duration.

This is particularly of use to endurance athletes, as the nature of their events and training puts them at a higher risk of contracting a cold in the first place. And we all know how frustrating colds can be!

DOSE

Superloading zinc over the duration of a cold virus has been shown to be effective - this should be reduced to a maintenance dose or stopped once recovered however. An acute dose would be 25-50mg zinc daily, a maintenance dose would be 5-10mg. Ideally this shouldn't be taken at the same time as a magnesium or calcium supplement (or even milk) as this reduces the effectiveness of the zinc.

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MULTIVITAMIN

Last but not least on this list, multivitamins are really only useful if your diet is particularly deficient in terms of nutrient intake. Most people who consume a variety of fruits, vegetables and lean protein shouldn't need to supplement their diet with a multivitamin. However, if for whatever reason that is not the case, they can be useful in preventing micronutrient deficiencies.

DOSE

Generally, most multivitamin manufacturers tend to supply 100% of the maintenance dose of each micronutrient - therefore a single tablet per day is sufficient. Something to bear in mind however is that some multivitamins contain Vitamin D or Zinc and therefore the dosage in the multivitamin should be included in working out your overall dose for each of those, if taking separately.

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