

A more productive you might be just a multivitamin away!



Coffee for breakfast, fast food for lunch, and maybe if you are lucky, a healthy dinner. This probably sounds very familiar to the average business man or woman who puts in eight to ten hour days. Can you imagine this diet supplying your body with the vitamins it needs to function properly? Many people don't realize that on top of the general health benefits, just how much better a balanced diet and providing your body with the vitamins and minerals it needs, will make you feel. Everyone is so used to eating the way they do, that they have also become accustomed to the way they feel. Being tired and not having enough energy to get you through the day, is easily blamed on the hours you work and responsibilities you have, rather than poor diet and lack of sufficient vitamins and minerals. Improved eating habits and the addition of a multivitamin can make a

remarkable difference in the way you feel and the energy you have throughout the day. Eating healthy is a topic I hope to cover in a future column, but today I want to talk about the importance of a good multivitamin.

No matter how healthy you think your diet may be, it is extremely difficult to get the optimal daily amount of essential vitamins and minerals. Individual needs are different, making the recommended daily levels of vitamins and minerals tremendously different from one person to the next. Not only your lifestyle, but your stress levels are not the same as the person in the office next to you. So how can you possibly require the same recommended amount of daily vitamins and minerals in your multivitamin? Another important fact to keep in mind is that "recommended" and "optimal" intake levels are very different. The recommended daily intake is usually just enough to prevent deficiencies, while reaching the optimal level of vitamins and minerals each day has many more benefits. If you are one of the select few such as me, who are able to regularly eat five to six small portioned, healthy meals a day, then you might achieve the recommended intake. However, there is little chance that diet alone will get you to the optimal daily level.

Some of the most common vitamins and minerals found in a multivitamin, include Vitamins A, B, C and D. These vitamins support healthy eyes, skin, muscle tone, strong bones and contain antioxidants for fighting heart disease and some types of cancer. They also help produce energy and support immune and nervous system function. Others, such as Vitamins E and K, along with Calcium, Potassium, Magnesium and Iron, which also include antioxidants, support stronger bones, hair, nails and teeth, as well as help fight infection.

Deficiencies in the needed amount of vitamins and minerals have been known to be contributing factors to the development of anemia, depression, high blood pressure, osteoporosis as well as loss of memory and other cognitive functions as you age.

Medical and fitness authorities agree that virtually everyone should be taking a supplemental multivitamin. The Journal of the American Medical Association reversed its long-held stance on the value of vitamin supplements and recommends that all adults take a multivitamin daily. Vitamins and minerals are necessary for everything from fighting disease to packing on muscle. When choosing a multivitamin don't settle for the first one you find on the grocery store shelf. If you don't like vegetables, be sure to pick a vitamin that includes a greens blend. For individuals with higher stress levels, be sure to choose one high in B vitamins as stress can lead to a Vitamin B deficiency. Today's multivitamins are available in capsules, gel caps and even liquid formulas. Whether you are male, female, 20 years old or 60 years old, there is a multivitamin out there just for you! When selecting a multivitamin, or making any significant changes in your diet or exercise routine, you should always seek the advice of a health or nutrition professional.

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