

Natural Versus Synthetic Vitamins

Did you know that more than 95% of all vitamin supplements sold today are synthetic? (vitamins, not minerals) Did you know that vitamins can be labeled as “natural” if they contain as little as 10% of the natural form of the vitamin (that means 90% of it is synthetically produced chemicals).

There are nutritionists called orthomolecularists who argue that there is no difference between a "synthetic" and a "natural" vitamin molecule. Synthetic vitamins are an isolated part of the complete molecule or a simulated nutrient created in a laboratory. Synthetic vitamins are chemicals that can be produced in high potencies. True natural vitamins, while not highly concentrated, contain all the phyto-nutrients found in food. The body responds to synthetic vitamins similar to drugs (foreign substances), and like all drugs they have the potential to change metabolic functions. Synthetic vitamins can function like drugs in that they can reduce symptoms caused by nutrient deficiencies. But also like drugs, synthetic vitamins do not support tissue regeneration because you can't heal or repair organic tissue with foreign inorganic substances. But unlike drugs, you don't experience the uncomfortable side effects because synthetic vitamins are “organic look-a-likes”. Many people are so nutrient deficient (unbalanced diets, junk food lovers, and alcoholics) that their body uses the high dose drug-like vitamins to “treat” the symptoms of their nutrient deficiencies, thus improving functionality. The body has a priority it operates by: first survive, then function, and lastly regeneration; which can only happen from real foods.

The evidence is rather weak that people who take vitamins do better than those who don't. But it has also been shown that African-Americans and sun deprived people benefit from extra Vitamin D. Pregnant women need extra folic acid to prevent birth defects and people over the age of 50 have better memory from taking B12. Many people realize more energy by supplementing with a B-complex. Meir Stampfer, professor of nutrition and epidemiology at the Harvard School of Public Health in Boston, says that taking more than the Institute of Medicine's recommended daily allowance (RDA) of certain vitamins may lower one's risk for certain chronic diseases.

Even though a balanced diet is the best source of essential nutrients, can diet alone be enough to provide all the micronutrients one needs to maintain wellness? Not likely due to the following reasons: soil depletion, produce harvested before ripening, industrial food processing, prescribed medications cause nutrient depletions, digestive issues and normal aging decrease nutrient absorption, and the more toxic we are the more nutrition is required to deal with the toxins. And everyone is consuming some amount of genetically modified foods (GMO crops are laden with pesticides). Incidentally, organically grown foods have been proven to be 10 to 30% more nutritious. And according to a 2012 study performed by the National Health and Nutrition

Examination Survey and the CDC, micronutrient deficiencies due to inadequate dietary intake were found to be widespread in the US population. That study also showed that those who took multi-vitamin/mineral supplements had a higher intake of micronutrients from both food and supplement sources, thus had less deficiencies.