Nutrition for Older Adults: Vitamin and Mineral Supplements

Nutrition and Older Adults

Many older adults can get the nutrients they need by eating a variety of foods following the USDA MyPlate Daily Checklist.

The more variety, the less likely one is to get too much or too little of a nutrient.

Some Older Adults May Benefit From a Vitamin and Mineral Supplement

While older adults can get the nutrients they need eating a diet following the USDA MyPlate Daily Checklist many do not do so.

Many factors can cause older adults to eat less or have a poor diet:

• Decreased appetite.
• Changes in vision, taste and smell.
• Decreased strength and energy.
• Chewing and swallowing problems.

Older adults with these issues may benefit from a vitamin and mineral supplement.

Choosing a Supplement

Look for the USP code to assure strength and purity.

Choose a supplement with a variety of vitamins and minerals.

Do not take single vitamins or minerals unless advised by a doctor. One exception is calcium.

Choose a supplement with no more than 100 percent of recommended amounts.

Do not take vitamins or minerals in large amounts unless advised by a doctor.
You Can Get Too Much

One may think more of a vitamin or mineral is better. However, vitamins or minerals taken in large amounts can be harmful.

Too much or too little of a nutrient can affect how the body uses other nutrients.

It is easier to get too much of a vitamin or mineral from a supplement than from food.

You Have To Judge

Not all claims on supplements are FDA approved.

Drugs are tested for safety before they can be sold.

Supplements are not tested for safety before they are allowed to be sold.

Supplements Do Not Replace Diet

Supplements do not make up for a poor diet.

Supplements do not have all the nutrients important for health.

Keys to good nutrition are variety and moderation.

Eating a diet following the USDA MyPlate Daily Checklist is the best way to get the right foods in the right amounts for good health.

Sources