



YOUR NATURAL PRESCRIPTION FOR
LIVING IN A PROCESSED WORLD

6 steps to selecting the perfect supplement

1. Know your numbers – If you're taking prescription drugs, you're likely deficient in some vitamins and minerals. In fact, most Americans are deficient in magnesium and vitamin D¹⁻⁴. However, instead of just "guessing" what to supplement, it makes sense to work with your health care practitioner to identify your micronutrient deficiencies. [Spectracell](#) makes a blood test that can be ordered by your health care professional, which can identify your nutritional gaps. Note, this test may not be covered by insurance companies and can cost about \$100-\$200.

2. Read the label – Beware of what ingredients are in your supplement. Look at the label to identify active and inactive ingredients. The "active ingredient" is the substance you want. The "inactive" ingredients are additives used to inexpensively "fill" or "bind" the product. Many of these fillers or binders contain common allergens, including corn, gluten and soy. You'll also want to avoid any products with hydrogenated oils, artificial colors or flavors, magnesium stearate and titanium dioxide.

3. Choose the right form – Ask your doctor or pharmacist to help you select the most "bioavailable" form, or the one that will promote quick uptake by the body of the nutrients they possess. This form could be a tablet, capsule or liquid that can easily get into the body so that it can perform the process needed to take part in activities of the cell.

4. Select a reputable manufacturer – As with many things, you get what you pay for with supplements. Recently in the state of New York, it was found that 4 out of 5 supplements did not contain the ingredient listed on the label and included some unwanted ones as well ([read more here](#)). Even though supplements are not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), some manufacturers choose to comply with the current [Good Manufacturing Practices \(GMP\)](#), which is a designation that can also be found on the product label. Seek out a trusted brand through a reputable pharmacy, health food store, or from your doctor. Be equally cautious when buying supplements online.

5. Avoid combination products – Unless directed by your doctor or pharmacist, you'll want to avoid any products with more than one active ingredient. This will ensure you don't get extra ingredients that you don't need, are allergic to, or may not be beneficial to your condition.

6. Start with one product at a time – Remember to start only one supplement at a time. Take note of how you feel, including any side effects and report back to your practitioner. Work with your health care practitioner to determine if and when it's best to add another supplement to your regimen – usually in 2-3 weeks after the start of the first one.

References:

1. Dean, C. The Magnesium Miracle. New York, NY; 2003.
2. Holick, MF. The Vitamin D Solution: A 3-Step Strategy to Cure Our Most Common Health Problems; 2010.
3. Mercola J. Magnesium—The Missing Link to Better Health. December 8, 2013. <http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2013/12/08/magnesium-health-benefits.aspx>. Accessed May 15, 2015.
4. Mercola, J. Vitamin D—One of the Simplest Solutions to Wide-Ranging Health Problems. December 22, 2013. <http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2013/12/22/dr-holick-vitamin-d-benefits.aspx>. Accessed May 15, 2015.

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