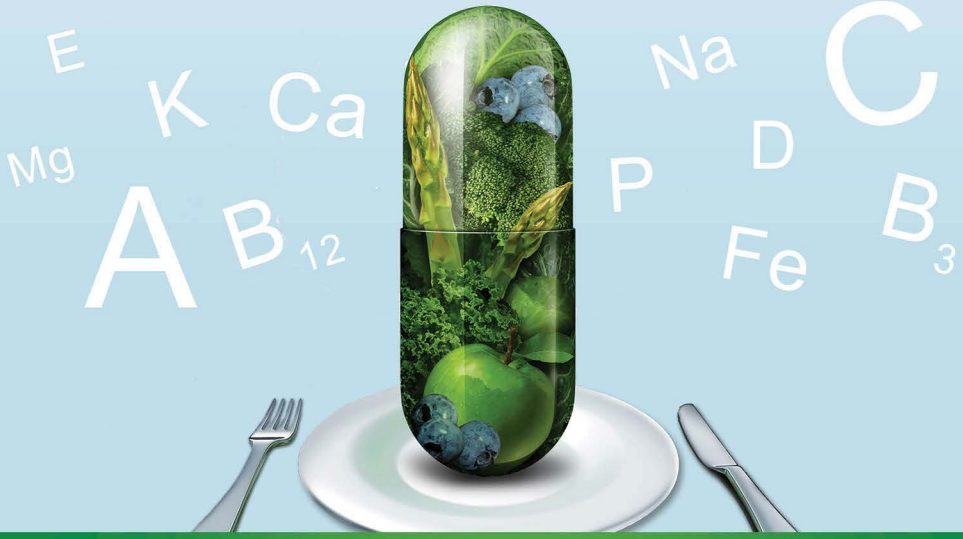
YOUR SUPPLEMENT GUIDE

When a bargain **ISN'T** a bargain



DR. THADDEUS GALA

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NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

For years, I've used nutritional supplements among my patients. My family and friends swear by them. I never miss a day taking them. While studies support their effectiveness, I've also personally witnessed how taking supplements can transform health, boost vitality, and help people look and feel their best.

At the same time, massive confusion surrounds supplements. When patients show me what they take, I sometimes wince at the ingredients and other problems.

Worse than just wasting money and time on inferior, ineffective supplements, these patients put their hard-earned health on the line ingesting hydrogenated oils, artificial colors, rancid oils, and other junk many commercial supplements contain.

I wrote this guide to help my patients and readers overcome the confusing array of supplement choices and help them determine what works for them. Without becoming encyclopedic or overwhelming, I've tried to provide a basic understanding about popular supplements and how to make optimal choices.

My ultimate goal is to empower you to reach your health goals, whether they include losing weight, gaining energy, or reversing chronic disease. I've witnessed numerous times in my practice how the right supplements can turn good health into *glowing health.*

At the end, you'll find frequently asked questions (FAQs) I've received from patients about supplements. If I didn't answer yours, I'd love to hear from you via email or on my Facebook page.

Here's to your health,
Dr. Thaddeus Gala, DC

WHY TAKE NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS?

"Look at my food journal," a patient will occasionally tell me. "I'm certain I'm getting everything I need without supplements." Others will tell me their former doctor dismissed supplements as expensive urine. A few tell me they can't afford supplements, yet when I look at their food journal I see they spend upwards of $10 daily on things like specialty coffee drinks and snack-food runs.

During my many years in practice, I've heard every excuse about avoiding supplements. And, I almost always reply that even if you eat a pristine, organic, whole foods diet with an array of nutrients, you *still* need to supplement. You can't get around that.

That isn't just my opinion. Studies show getting adequate nutrients solely through a well-balanced diet is nearly impossible with today's food sources and lifestyles.

Two particular case studies found only supplementation *combined* with the right diet – *not* food alone – could "significantly boost nutrient levels and confer beneficial effects on general welfare, physical performance, and resistance to infections." Researchers recommended *everyone* needs nutritional supplements.[1]

But why can't a healthy, well-designed diet provide optimal nutrients?

That's a great question. After all, our great-grandparents probably didn't supplement and sometimes lived into their 80s or 90s.

Unfortunately, studies show our modern diet bears little resemblance to the vitamin-and-mineral-rich foods we ate even a few generations ago. One study looked at 43 fruits and vegetables and found nutritional values declined significantly over 50 years.

1 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18029339

More specifically, researchers found six nutrients – protein, calcium, phosphorus, iron, riboflavin, and vitamin C – had statistically declined.[2] Numerous factors contribute to these nutrient declines, including:

1. **Farming practices.** Just a few generations ago, most food sources came from local farmers or home gardens. Today, increased population and more hectic lifestyles mean food sometimes comes from thousands of miles away rather than grown locally.
2. **Depleted soil.** Modern agricultural methods like increased pesticides and fertilizers deplete our soil. Most plants require only three nutrients to grow: nitrogen, phosphorus, and water. With those nutrients, a plant can grow but would be nutritionally empty and less likely to defend itself. Farmers then spray pesticides, antifungals, and other chemicals on these plants so they can survive.
3. **Genetically modified organisms (GMOs)**. Scientists create GMOs in a laboratory process where genes become altered to artificially create a new species. Most American crops – including soy, corn, and wheat – are now genetically engineered. If you eat processed foods (even healthy ones; most of us do sometimes), they often contain GMO ingredients.
4. **Lifestyle changes**. Life today is vastly different than even 50 years ago. Most families have less time to eat together due to demanding work and extracurricular schedules. In many families, both parents work full-time so meals often consist of easy boxed, canned, and takeout foods. Family meals have declined or completely disappeared.
5. **Maximized profit.** To fill an ever-growing demand, manufacturers increase food production. I'm not just talking about processed foods. Modern growing methods allow even fruits and vegetables to increase productivity. Maximum profit, not your health, becomes the bottom line for most modern food, even the stuff you find in healthier supermarkets.
6. **Aging.** Studies show getting older – hey, it happens to us all – puts you at greater risk for malnutrition.[3] That makes sense when you consider you might not break down food as efficiently or utilize its nutrients as well as you grow older.

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2 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15637215
3 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2563720

7. **Stress.** Life today is full of stressors that accumulate to drain your energy and peace of mind. Among its damage, chronic stress depletes numerous nutrients including vitamins B, C, A, and magnesium. Studies show a B-complex vitamin supplement can reduce stress and provide other quality of life benefits.[4] Likewise, an omega-3 fatty acid intake can boost mood and reduce your inflammatory response to stressors.[5]

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 60 percent of related factors to individual health and quality of life correlate with lifestyle factors including sleep, exercise, diet, recreation, medications, and substance abuse.[6]

That's actually *good* news because it shows you have enormous potential to reduce your disease risk and live a vibrant, healthy life with the right food and lifestyle choices. To optimize those choices demands supplementing with a few quality, science-proven supplements.

Successful People Make Healthy a Habit

Creating new habits can be difficult. One key that can make healthy habits easier involves surrounding yourself with the right information, support, and resources. Some physiologist argue our surroundings influence up to 80 percent of our behavior.

The biggest difference I see between people who win at their health goals versus those who struggle or yo-yo boils down to one thing: Environment. Although important, I don't mean clean air and water. I'm talking about the people we hang out with, the books we read, the health care providers we choose, and the supplements they take. I've learned my healthiest, happiest patients are those who follow our teachings, receive our newsletters, and stay "plugged in" to health-minded information.

4 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4290459
5 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2868080
6 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4703222

According to the federal government's 2015 – 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, "Nutritional needs should be met primarily from foods. Foods in nutrient-dense forms contain essential vitamins and minerals, dietary fiber and other naturally occurring substances that may have positive health effects. In some cases, fortified foods and dietary supplements may be useful in providing one or more nutrients that otherwise may be consumed in less-than-recommended amounts."[7]

I agree: Food should be your nutrient foundation. You cannot swallow capsules and soft gels while shoveling down fast food and sugar-loaded coffee drinks, and then subsequently expect to attain or maintain optimal health.

Supplements are just that: They supplement a healthy diet and lifestyle.

Even if you always eat a whole food, pristine, organic diet, the factors I mentioned above and other factors mean you aren't getting optimal nutrients and probably even depleting the nutrients you are getting.

My healthiest, happiest patients consistently take supplements. Even though studies exist, they don't need science to substantiate supplements' benefits. Once they start taking them, they immediately become believers. "I never leave home without them," they often say.

Many patients didn't begin with that perspective. They might have arrived on their first visit feeling cynical or offering excuses why they shouldn't supplement. "Just give me the basics," they sometimes say. "If I must take them, what key supplements should I take that don't cost half my paycheck or turn sorting into a new hobby?"

7 https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines

After years of research, empirical lab reviews, and working with thousands of patients, I've narrowed that list down. I've found many patients are deficient in what I call the Core Four:

- **The omega-3 fatty acids EPA/DHA** (Fish Oil)
- **Vitamin D**
- **Magnesium**
- **A broad-spectrum multivitamin/mineral** (typically iron-free)

I'll discuss these in more detail later. When I put patients on these four supplements, they see almost immediate improvements. They feel better, look better, lose weight easier, and their blood work often comes back better. I see the Core Four as a minimum-cost investment in optimal health.

WHEN A BARGAIN ISN'T SUCH A BARGAIN…

Before you rush out to buy these, you should understand a few crucial aspects about supplements.

To be effective, you need nutrients in the:

- **Correct bioavailable form**
- **Correct dosage**
- **Correct delivery method**

While I don't like to generalize and there *are* a few good over-the-counter (OTC) supplement brands, most commercial stuff is, quite frankly, junk.

(Note: Throughout this guide, I use OTC and commercial interchangeably. They mean the same thing.)

These inferior, poorly regulated supplements are what give the industry a bad name. When patients say something like "Supplements don't work," I usually find they take inferior supplements.

The Federal Drug Administration (FDA) allows supplement companies to test and monitor their own products, leading to erratic quality control. A recent investigation by the New York State attorney general's office revealed a troubling problem among some manufacturers: Their products don't contain the ingredients listed on the label.[8]

While they only tested a few supplements (and mostly herbal products), this problem exists across the board with many commercial brands. I see it all the time among multivitamins, fish oil, and other popular supplements.

8 https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2015/02/03/gnc-target-wal-mart-walgreens-accused-of-selling-fake-herbals/?utm_term=.648c758b0509

Listen, everyone loves a bargain. With supplements, you get what you pay for. Many of my patients, looking for a "deal," purchase supplements at drugstores, mega-warehouse stores, or online based on price rather than on effectiveness.

Others get sucked into the front-label claims but don't read ingredients correctly. When they don't get the results they need, they dismiss supplements as ineffective. Well, yes, they *are* ineffective if you aren't taking the correct doses, that supplement contains less of a nutrient than its label claimed, or you're not absorbing that nutrient.

One patient arrived with a massive bottle of warehouse fish oil thinking she got a deal buying in bulk. Even though the label said "1,000 mg omega 3s," I turned the bottle over and showed her every soft gel only had 180 mg of EPA and 120 mg of DHA, the two active omega 3s. A little math revealed to get a therapeutic amount of these omega 3s, she would have to swallow 16 soft gels!

I showed her the professional brand I offer, which also didn't contain filler and other junk her bargain-basement brand had, plus it required just *four* soft gels to get that same amount of omega 3s. Turns out that fish oil supplement "bargain" she was taking wasn't such a deal.

On a subsequent visit, she remarked about how she had to swallow fewer soft gels, didn't get that nasty "fish burp" she had with her commercial supplement, and overall had peace of mind she was taking a quality product.

I hate seeing patients spend hard-earned money on supplements that don't produce the desired result or could be potentially harmful. At the same time, navigating the supplement world can become confusing. One of my jobs as a doctor is to demystify the process and help patients develop the perfect supplement regimen.

Before my patients buy supplements, I encourage them to ask a few questions including:

- Does the company use a **qualified** PhD, **registered** Dietician, or Medical Doctor to formulate their product based on the latest research?
- Are the raw materials **tested** for efficacy, quality, and contaminates?
- Does the company use **government-approved** Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP)?
- After the product is manufactured, are ingredients tested to ensure they match the label and **free** of contaminants?

WHY I ONLY RECOMMEND PROFESSIONAL-QUALITY SUPPLEMENTS

You might be tempted to buy that "money-saving" mega-bottle of fish oil or a year's worth of multivitamins from your bargain-basement warehouse store, but save your bargain prowess for other things. With supplements, you only want to buy professional brands.

Unlike many commercial brands, professional-only supplements have strict guidelines about who can sell and buy their products. You won't find them on drugstore shelves, they employ third-party inspectors who ensure they contain the exact ingredients the label says, and they maintain a stellar reputation among doctors and other healthcare professionals.

Further, practitioners who sell professional supplements have a reputation to uphold. If your healthcare professional sells you a specific supplement, you expect to get results. Beyond the manufacturer, *their* reputation is on the line. They aren't going to sell you a product they don't stand behind.

Professional supplements contain therapeutic doses of nutrients in their most bioavailable form. That means you're getting the right amount of a nutrient, but equally important, that your body assimilates that nutrient most efficiently. After all, if you aren't absorbing a nutrient optimally, you won't get therapeutic amounts even if the supplement contains that amount.

You'll find many online vendors who sell reputable commercial brands. If you prefer to buy them in person, you can find a nutritionist, compounding pharmacy, doctor, or other healthcare practitioner in your town that sells professional supplements.

To make that process even easier, I've created my own brand of supplements: Clinical Omega-3, Vitamin D Longevity, Clinical Multi-vitamin, and Clinical Magnesium.

I take this regimen, my family does, and I confidently recommend it to my patients. While I might eventually include additional supplements to address a patient's specific needs, about 80 – 90 percent of my patients do very well with the Core Four.

Whether your goal (or goals) include losing weight, having more energy, reducing chronic pain, or balancing blood sugar, these four supplements create impressive results.

While they might initially seem more expensive than OTC supplements, patients discover in the bigger picture they save time, effort, and money using these supplements.

THE CORE FOUR FOUNDATION

I've simplified these four supplements into a convenient Core Four package to take the guesswork and effort out of finding the right supplements. You can purchase the Core Four package here: store.DrThadGala.com, conveniently have it delivered to your door every month. Whether you purchase these four supplements here or elsewhere, copious research shows they can benefit a variety of conditions, making them essential in my practice. Let's look a little more closely at these four supplements and why I believe nearly everyone benefits from them.

Multivitamin/Mineral

Studies show about half of women and 43 percent of men take a multi-vitamin-mineral (multi). A good multi fills in common nutritional gaps and deficiencies most people experience today even with the best of diets.

Benefits of Taking a Multi

As I mentioned before, numerous factors mean almost none of us are getting the nutrients we need from food alone, and a multivitamin fills in those nutritional gaps.

Many studies show the benefits of taking a quality daily multivitamin-mineral. Among them include:

- **Weight loss.** Two studies – one cross-sectional and one randomized double-blind **–** found a multivitamin suppressed appetite for women and helped men lose more weight compared to those who didn't take a multivitamin.[9]

- **Type 2 diabetes.** Researchers note inflammation and oxidative stress are common among people with Type 2 diabetes, and micronutrient supplementation could benefit those and other conditions.[10] Optimal amounts of specific nutrients including chromium[11] and vitamin D[12] might also improve fasting glucose levels and other diabetes-related factors. Additionally, one study found optimal vitamin and mineral intake could lower blood pressure for people with Type 2 diabetes.[13]

- **Brain health.** A large population-based observational study found healthy older adults who used antioxidants including vitamins E and C along with a multi were 50 percent less likely to experience cognitive decline (but not dementia) at five years follow-up compared with those who didn't.[14]

I could go on, but you get the point. A multivitamin-mineral should be a workhorse and combine optimal amounts of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and even conditionally essential nutrients.

Even among professional-quality multivitamins you'll find a lot of variation, and not all of them are created equally. Among the things to look for in a multi include:

9 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17977472
10 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3044790
11 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23683609
12 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21731035
13 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15190052
14 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3311304

1. Mixed-tocopherol **vitamin E** (high gamma) rather than just alpha-tocopherol. One study showed gamma-tocopherol alone or combined with alpha-tocopherol could improve oxidative stress and inflammation in people with metabolic syndrome.[15]

2. **Highly absorbable** forms of **minerals** – Albion chelated minerals are best.

3. High levels of all **B vitamins** – things like chronic stress deplete B vitamins like crazy.

4. If you choose a **multivitamin with copper**, opt for copper glycinate chelate, a stabilized mineral chelate from Albion Minerals that reduces the risk of free copper in your body that can create oxidative stress.

5. Unless you are premenopausal, look for an **iron-free multivitamin**.

6. At least 1,000 IU of **vitamin D** as vitamin D3 along with **vitamin K-1** (phytonadione) and **vitamin K-2** (menaquinone).

7. **Calcium and magnesium** in a 1:2 ratio.

8. **Selenium and Iodine** in balance for healthy thyroid function.

9. Natural mixed **carotenoids**.

10. Conditionally **essential nutrients** to optimize things like blood sugar levels, including:
    - Alpha lipoic acid
    - Trimethylglycine (TMG)
    - Fruit bioflavonoids
    - Choline
    - Inositol

11. **Capsules rather than tablets** – capsules absorb more effectively.

15 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2676174

Unfortunately, most multivitamins don't fall under the "good" category. The National Institutes of Health groups them into several categories[16]:

- Once-daily multivitamins that contain nutrient levels close to the Daily Values (DVs), Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDAs), or Adequate Intakes (AIs) for these nutrients.
- Multivitamins that contain nutrient levels substantially higher than the DV, RDA, AI, and the established tolerable upper intake level (UL). They might also include other nutritional and herbal ingredients. These usually require two or more pills daily.
- Specialized multivitamins for specific conditions. These often include vitamins and minerals along with herbal and specialty ingredients like coenzyme Q10. Again, some nutrients might be present at levels substantially above the DV, RDA, AI and, in some cases, the UL.

Keep in mind these descriptions do *not* differentiate between commercial and professional supplements. Yet even from that, you can see that not all multivitamins are created equal. Many commercial brands contain cheap, less bioavailable, often-synthetic ingredients that could create more harm than good. In some cases, the dosage doesn't match the label or the ingredients.

Many commercial brands use the "oxide" form of minerals like magnesium that are poorly absorbable. They contain synthetic versions of nutrients like vitamin E. (Ingredients that have "dl" contain synthetic vitamin E.)

16 https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/MVMS-HealthProfessional

They also often contain junk ingredients. Many contain added ingredients that are potentially harmful, including artificial colors (like FD&C Blue No. 1), hydrogenated oils, lead, mercury, PCBs, talc or magnesium silicate, and titanium dioxide.

Even though many commercial multivitamins contain these and other shocking ingredients, I regularly get well-intended patients that arrive at their initial visit showing me these supplements they take regularly. "Taking that isn't doing you an iota of good," I often bluntly reply, "and probably creates more harm than good."

Junky ingredients make multivitamins and other supplements just that: *Junk.* I get patients who wouldn't dare eat a food containing trans fat that take supplements with hydrogenated oil.

"If you spot any of these nasties in vitamins, take a photo of the label and Tweet it," says the American College of Healthcare Sciences. "Tag the manufacturer and store where you found it." Other suggestions include: "Go post your photo on the manufacturer's Facebook page asking why those toxic ingredients are there."[17]

If those strategies aren't for you, simply *put it back on the shelf* when you see these and other undesirable ingredients.

Better yet, skip them altogether for a professional-quality multi-vitamin.

Even among professional brands, you're spending about a dollar daily for a quality multivitamin/mineral. Think about that. For far less than you spend on a designer coffee or afternoon snack, you get optimal amounts of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and other nutrients that cover bases you're probably not getting with food.

Ultimately, one-a-day and even multi-pill commercial multivitamins cost you far more than what you "save." You risk not fulfilling those nutrient gaps and more detrimental, create potential harm to your health and well-being. Don't take that risk. Buy a quality multivitamin that contains therapeutic – *not minimum-wage* – nutrient amounts.

17 http://info.achs.edu/blog/5-dangerous-ingredients-in-your-vitamins-and-dietary-supplements

Good, Better, Best

I mentioned many commercial multivitamins contain the synthetic (dl) version of vitamin E. Always look for the d designation, which indicates it contains the *natural* version of vitamin E.

Here's the thing. Naturally occurring vitamin E includes eight fat-soluble isoforms (four tocopherols and four tocotrienol). Your body preferentially uses alpha-tocopherol.[18] However, some foods like pumpkin seeds are higher in gamma-tocopherol,[19] which is the major form of vitamin E in our diets and (unlike alpha-tocopherol) carries anti-inflammatory and other beneficial properties.[20]

Most professional brands contain alpha-tocopherol, yet that doesn't mimic the mixed-isoform vitamin E we get from food. To do that, you want a supplement with *mixed* tocopherols and a higher ratio of gamma-tocopherol. That's how you get vitamin E in food, and you want to mimic that in a multivitamin-mineral.

Clinical Complete Multivitamin is one of the very few professional formulations that provide mixed tocopherols with a high amount of gamma-tocopherol. It's little things – that ultimately *aren't* so little – that make our multivitamin the best on the market.

Fish Oil

"Essential fatty acids" mean your body can't make them, so you need to get them from food or supplements. They fall into two categories: Omega 3 fatty acids, which are anti-inflammatory, and omega 6 fatty acids, which are for the most part inflammatory.

18 http://lpi.oregonstate.edu/mic/vitamins/vitamin-E
19 https://www.ars.usda.gov/ARSUserFiles/80400525/articles/aicr06_nutseed.pdf
20 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11722951

***Worth noting:* There are a few healthy, anti-inflammatory omega 6 fatty acids like gamma-linolenic acid or GLA, but these are more the exception than the rule. When most experts refer to omega 6 fatty acids, they mean those found in vegetable oils and processed foods.**

Among those omega 3 fatty acids, the most-researched and beneficial are eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA). When you buy a fish oil supplement, those are the only two numbers that matter.Thousands of years ago, we ate about equal amounts of omega 3s and omega 6s. As vegetable oils and then processed foods became more prevalent, that ratio shifted. Today, researchers predict we eat *20* times more inflammatory omega 6s compared to omega 3s.[21] Among the repercussions of those imbalances include obesity and chronic disease.

Studies show upwards of 90 percent of Americans today show deficiencies in these fatty acids.[22] I see the repercussions of this all the time in my practice with numerous problems like elevated inflammatory markers, increased risk for Type 2 diabetes, and weight loss resistance.

21 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26950145
22 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3992162

I have patients occasionally ask whether fish oil supplements become necessary because they eat a lot of fish. Unfortunately, most fish these days (especially what you get in restaurants and grocery stores) is farmed-raised, which yields an overall unimpressive omega 3 profile.

At the same time, many patients don't eat enough low-mercury fatty fish and other Omega-3 rich foods – some even hate eating fish, period – so supplementing with quality fish oil becomes mandatory.

I recommend nearly all my patients take fish oil. Beyond a multivitamin-mineral, I can't think of a bigger multitasking supplement. Among their benefits, studies show quality fish oil can benefit numerous conditions including:

- **Arthritis**. Several controlled studies that compared ibuprofen and omega-3s showed equal effect to reduce arthritic pain. Fish oil supplements proved safer than NSAIDs.[23]

- **Weight loss.** One meta-analysis found especially with lifestyle modifications, fish oil supplementation could help reduce abdominal fat.[24]

- **Brain health**. Studies link low amounts of EPA and DHA to delayed brain development and increased risk for Alzheimer's Disease. Researchers believe increasing intake could improve cognitive function.[25]

- **Type 2 diabetes**. One review of 20 randomized control trials found high intake of EPA and DHA lowered triglyceride (TG) levels and decreased other markers in the blood including plasma insulin and body mass index (BMI).[26] Another meta-analysis showed fish oil could lower triglyceride levels effectively by almost 30 percent, making it useful among people with Type 2 diabetes to treat dyslipidemia.[27]

23 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16531187
24 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4646500
25 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4734634
26 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4591987
27 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/9571330

Not All Fish Oils are Created Equally

Among even professional fish oils, you'll find two types: Ethyl Ester (EE) and Triglyceride (TG). I highly recommend the TG form, which is more bioavailable than EE and the naturally occurring form in food and in your body. The TG form absorbs more easily and is less prone to oxidation and free radicals.

Keep in mind, though, not all TG oils are created the same. Industry standards allow a label to legally claim the fish oil as "TG" if it is a minimum of 60 percent TG. The remainder is a mixture of EE and other oils. Look for the TruTG™ seal, which guarantees a minimum 90 percent triglyceride-bound (TG) omega-3 fish oils (40 – 50 percent higher than the industry standard for most TG fish oil concentrate products).

Store-brand fish oils have often been sitting on the shelves far too long. Especially when that oil is not combined with tocopherols (vitamin E) and other antioxidants, it can quickly go rancid, creating more harm than good. When you get "fish burp," that's a sure sign your fish oil is rancid.

As I mentioned earlier with my patients, most OTC fish oils contain low amounts of EPA and DHA. It doesn't matter what the front label says. Even if it says "1,000 mg," turn it around and look at the ingredients. The omega 3s EPA and DHA are the ***only two*** that matter when you buy a fish oil.

For freshness, efficacy, and other quality issues, I always recommend buying professional-quality fish oil. Even among professional brands, you will find varying quality. Here are some things to look for:

- **Sustainable US caught fish** – 100 percent sourced from certified sustainable US-caught wild Alaskan fish [Alaska Polluck- Theragra chalcogramma] and processed in the US.
- **Environmental awareness** – fisheries that use a holistic approach that respects and evaluates the impact on the entire Bering Sea ecosystem.
- **Certified by MSC** – this fish oil concentrate carries the prestigious ecolabel certification form the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), the world's leading certification and Eco labeling program for sustainable seafood.
- **Cold extraction** – process used for refining of the EPA & DHA fatty acids.
- **Minimally processed** – produced to the highest standards of purity and quality.
- **Molecular distillation** – removes fishy odor and taste to ensure purity.
- **Filtration** – removes PCBs, chlorinated organ pollutants and heavy metals.

You'll find fish oil in soft gels and liquid. Most liquids are flavored with lemon or orange, but many patients still found the texture or taste unpleasant. Others hated swallowing numerous soft gels to get the right amounts of fish oil. These were my reasons for designing Clinical Omega Concentrate.

This highly potent, non-GMO fish oil provides an impressive 1,000 mg of omega-3 oils (662mg EPA and 250mg DHA) in each soft gel. That means you need to only take two to four soft gels daily to get therapeutic amounts of omega 3 fatty acids.

Clinical Omega Concentrate contains the triglyceride (TG) form for superior absorption and bioavailability. The oils are derived from fish sourced from certified sustainable US-caught wild Alaskan fish (Alaska Pollock) and processed in the US. These fish are freshly caught and quickly processed within hours, resulting in exceptionally fresh raw fish oil. This is the Rolls Royce of fish oil supplements.

Vitamin D

The name is a little misleading: Vitamin D is actually a hormone, and every cell in your body has a vitamin D receptor.[28] Your body can make it from sunlight and a few food sources offer it, but to get therapeutic benefits you must supplement.

I used to think lighter-skinned people who lived in a sunny climate wouldn't have any problem making enough vitamin D, especially in the summer. A client from Hawaii proved me wrong.

When we looked at her blood work, she had a vitamin D level of 5ng/ ml. (Optimal ranges, as I'll mention, are *at least* 40 ng/ ml.) How could someone get optimal sun exposure yet still be deficient?

Most people rarely get direct exposure to the sun. Even though she lived in a sunny climate, this client spent much of her time indoors, in her car, in the shade, or when she did go outside, slathered on sunscreen. During the little time she spent in the sun, the sun's angle was usually too low.

(Health Tip: You can only make vitamin D when your shadow is shorter than you.)

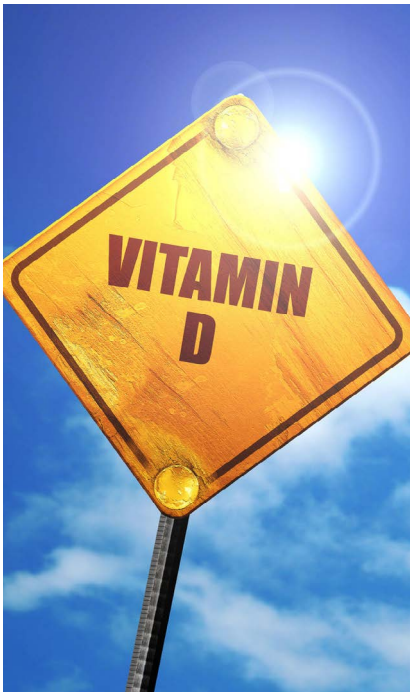
28 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3738435

Most patients don't get enough sun, nor do they eat vitamin D-rich foods. Even if they do, they don't consume enough to get a therapeutic dose. To put that into perspective, you would need to drink 10 gallons of milk daily to get sufficient vitamin D. (I don't recommend that. In fact, I don't recommend milk at all.)

Vitamin D supplements come in two forms: Vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol) and vitamin D2 (ergocalciferol).[29] Studies show vitamin D3 (the form you'll find in most supplements) is more effective than vitamin D2.[30] Vitamin D3 is typically derived from lanolin. Strict vegans might opt for a plant-derived vitamin D3 such as lichen.

Why is vitamin D important? Research shows vitamin D blood levels of at least at 60ng/ml can reduce your risk for:

- All Cancers combined by up to 77 percent
- Breast Cancer by 83 percent
- Multiple Sclerosis by 54 percent
- Type I Diabetes by 66 percent
- Fractures by 50 percent
- Colon Cancer by 60 percent
- Ovarian Cancer by 17 percent
- Falls by 72 percent
- Heart Attacks by 30 percent[31]



That's quite a resume. You can understand, then, why vitamin D supplementation becomes so important.

If you daily work many hours outdoors, you probably wouldn't need to worry. Most of us don't. We spend what little time we get outside using sunblock or seeking shade.

29 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4470966
30 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3417158
31 https://www.grassrootshealth.net

Among vitamin D's many roles, studies show it can benefit:

- **Pain relief.** Studies link low vitamin D with acute and chronic pain, and some clinical studies show supplementation with vitamin D deficiencies have improved pain scores.[32]
- **Weight loss.** Studies connect low vitamin D levels with obesity, and researchers suggest obese individuals require higher vitamin D doses than the general population.[33] One study found while vitamin D3 supplementation did not increase weight loss, women who reached optimal levels while losing weight experienced greater improvements.[34]
- **Testosterone.** Testosterone isn't just a guy's hormone. One study involving 200 healthy overweight men with lower levels of vitamin D and testosterone found those who supplemented with about 3,000 IUs of vitamin D daily for one year significantly increased total, bioactive, and free testosterone levels compared with the placebo group. Females also fare better with optimal levels, which play a role in things like sex drive, aging, and energy levels.[35]

To determine your vitamin D levels, ask your doctor for a 25-hydroxy vitamin D test. (Be specific: There is another type of blood test for vitamin D, called a $1,25(OH)_2D$ test, but the 25-hydroxy vitamin D test is the only one that will tell you whether you're getting enough vitamin D.)

Various organizations have different sufficiency levels, typically around 30 – 100 ng/ml. (I prefer my patients approach the higher end.) The Vitamin D Council suggests an ideal level of 50 ng/ml and recommends adults supplement with 5,000 IU/day daily to reach and stay at this level. Remember levels above 150 ng/ ml could potentially be toxic. [36]

Vitamin D works synergistically with vitamin K, and studies show higher doses of vitamin D potentially lower vitamin K levels.[37] Increasing amounts of vitamin D without adequate vitamin K could increase risk of calcium deposition in arteries and soft tissue, creating a detrimental effect on artery elasticity.

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32 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4470966
33 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3705328
34 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24622804
35 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21154195
36 https://www.vitamindcouncil.org/about-vitamin-d/testing-for-vitamin-d/
37 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17145139

Those are among the reasons my Vitamin D Longevity combines a powerful dose of vitamin D3 (as cholecalciferol) with vitamin K in both the K1 and MK-7 form of K2. Convenient, optimal dosing provides both nutrients in one easy-to-swallow capsule.

Worth mentioning: While I recommend you take all the Core Four supplements with meals, vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin that you will ideally take with your meal containing the most healthy dietary fat.

Magnesium

Magnesium plays a role in over 300 metabolic reactions. As a cofactor, this underrated mineral plays a part in numerous functions including protein synthesis, DNA synthesis, muscular contraction, blood pressure, and glucose and insulin metabolism. Low levels play a role in many chronic diseases including Alzheimer's disease, stroke, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and Type 2 diabetes. [38]

Studies show most people get less-than-optimal magnesium. Over the past 100 years, Americans went from getting about 500 mg a day to 175–225 mg a day due to things like increased fertilizer use and pervasive processed foods.[39]

Among the conditions getting sufficient magnesium benefit include:

- **Migraines/ headaches**. Studies show up to half of migraine sufferers might be magnesium-deficient. Low levels could also contribute to depression since magnesium plays a role in synthesis and release of serotonin and other neurotransmitters.[40]
- **Heart disease**. Experimental, epidemiological, and clinical studies show low magnesium levels might contribute to different types of heart diseases such as ischemic heart disease, congestive heart failure, sudden cardiac death, atherosclerosis, cardiac arrhythmias, and ventricular complications in diabetes mellitus.[41]

38 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23674807
39 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4586582
40 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22426836
41 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12349904

- **Type 2 diabetes**. Magnesium deficiencies are common in patients with Type 2 diabetes because insulin and glucose are important magnesium regulators. Most clinical studies and larger prospective studies show magnesium supplements greatly benefit people with Type 2 diabetes,[42] something I've seen repeatedly in my own practice.

While many (but not all) multivitamins contain some magnesium, researchers note such bulky minerals require taking those nutrients separately from your multivitamin.[43]

Buying magnesium supplements can become tricky. Most OTC products contain only magnesium oxide, a very poorly absorbable form.

Ideally, you will use a supplement that contains chelated magnesium. Studies show compared with the oxide form, people who use chelated magnesium absorb twice as much of the mineral.[44] I've also found among patients that chelated magnesium leads to fewer problems like loose stools that taking high amounts of this mineral can create.

That's why I created Clinical Magnesium Complete, a highly absorbable form of elemental magnesium chelated to two molecules of the amino acid glycine. This buffered chelated magnesium, from the world leader in chelated minerals (Albion), is the most efficient, effective ways to get optimal doses of this underrated mineral.

While I recommend taking the Core Four supplements during meals, some patients find that taking magnesium before bedtime and when they feel especially stressed promotes calmness and relaxation.

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42 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4549665
43 https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/MVMS-HealthProfessional
44 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=Bioavailability+of+Magnesium+-Diglycinate+vs+Magnesium+Oxide+in+Patients+with+Ileal+Resection

GOING BEYOND THE CORE FOUR: CONDITIONALLY ESSENTIAL NUTRIENTS

Everyone has unique nutritional requirements based on numerous factors including age, gender, activities, gene expression, and diet. As foundation supplements, everyone should take the Core Four. After working with thousands of patients, I've found these key nutrients can improve health and wellbeing, boost energy, reduce pain, and help with weight loss and proper metabolism.

In my practice I utilize numerous supplements beyond the Core Four. Among the most popular that I can confidently recommend to nearly anyone include these five. You'll find these and other professional-quality products in my clinics and on my online supplement store: store.DrThadGala.com. These are the same supplements I use myself and with my patients.

Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10)

Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10) is a fat-soluble compound that plays a key role in cellular energy metabolism that produces your energy currency, adenosine triphosphate (ATP). Organs with high-energy demands like your heart and liver have the highest concentrations of CoQ10.

Found in your mitochondria (your cells' "power plants" that create energy), CoQ10 also works as a powerful antioxidant that protects your cells from damage. Certain demographics, including the elderly and athletes, are more susceptible to CoQ10 deficiencies.[45]

45 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3096178

CoQ10 exists in two forms in your body: the ubiquinone and ubiquinol forms. Its name is derived from "ubiquitous" because it exists in nearly every cell within your body. In its ubiquinol form, CoQ10 works as a potent antioxidant because of its ability to scavenge free radicals.

Clinical CoQ10 is a non-GMO form of ubiquinol, the reduced, antioxidant form of CoQ10. Many patients' bodies have trouble converting ability ubiquinone to ubiquinol, especially as they age or with increased oxidative stress, which is why I use the ubiquinol form in my supplements.

Among people who benefit from supplementing with CoQ10 include:

- **Statin users**. Statin drugs can lower plasma levels of CoQ10, potentially creating problems including subclinical cardiomyopathy. Supplementing can replete these and other CoQ10-depleting situations.[46]

- **Chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) and other fatigue issues**. Because CoQ10 plays a key role in energy metabolism, deficiencies could create fatigue. Multiple factors contribute to chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) including marginal nutritional deficiencies like CoQ10 that contribute to the disease's clinical manifestations and become detrimental to the healing processes.[47]

- **Hypertension.** Eight published trials showed CoQ10 could benefit high blood pressure (hypertension). More specifically, CoQ10 lowered systolic blood pressure an average of 16 mm Hg and diastolic blood pressure10 mm Hg.[48]

- **Cancer.** Studies show CoQ10 can boost your immune system and directly suppress cancer growth.[49]

As a whole, CoQ10 absorbs very poorly, and better brands like our Clinical CoQ10 have advanced technology methods for optimal absorption. Because it is a fat-soluble nutrient, you should always take it with your meal containing the highest amount of healthy dietary fat.

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46 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17482884
47 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/10767667
48 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/14695924
49 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0032790

Clinical Paleo Protein

In my practice, patients have different goals. Some want to lose weight, have more energy, and balance blood sugar. Others want clearer skin. Most want to reverse or prevent Type 2 diabetes or other chronic illnesses. Regardless of those and other goals, I usually offer one suggestion: **Increase your protein intake.**

Doing that becomes easy with Clinical Paleo Protein, a great-tasting, dairy-free protein powder with 21 grams of protein and four carbs per serving.

Sourcing becomes crucial here. I encourage patients to avoid powders derived from sources like soy, whey, and casein, which can create food intolerances and other problems. Many protein powders taste terrible, contain sugar, artificial sweeteners, and other junk ingredients, don't mix well, and don't absorb well.

That's why I created Clinical Paleo Protein, which utilizes HydroBEEF™ as its protein source. This highly concentrated pure beef protein is produced through an exclusive proprietary process to allow the protein to be hydrolyzed into more peptides. That translates into easier absorption and assimilation.

Derived from beef raised in Sweden without hormones, or antibiotics, Clinical Paleo Protein comes in great-tasting chocolate or vanilla flavors. Its nutrient profile mimics what you get in nutrient-rich foods like bone broth.

Patients rave about how great it tastes, how easily it mixes into a shake (or even water), and how it keeps them full, focused, and feeling great for hours. Getting optimal protein becomes crucial whether you're an athlete, recovering from surgery, or want to lose weight. Studies show a meal replacement can help you lose weight and weight-maintenance parameters including inflammation and oxidative stress.[50]

Among the reasons I recommend a protein shake containing Clinical Paleo Protein to nearly all my patients include:

- **Satisfies hunger cravings.** Our Clinical Paleo Protein offers 21 grams of pure protein per serving and has a very low carb count. This gives you sustained energy for hours, avoiding those mid-morning "sugar crashes."
- **Quick and simple.** When you are rushing out the door a protein shake can be just as fast as reaching for that boxed breakfast. Put some ingredients in a blender and you have a healthy all-in-one meal for you and your family.
- **Best start.** Protein is made up of building blocks and plays many critical roles in the body. Protein is used to manufacture hormones, enzymes, cellular messengers, nucleic acids, and immune-system components. Without adequate protein our bodies can't put together the structures that make up every cell.
- **Meal replacement.** All of our shake recipes are packed with nutrient-loaded ingredients coupled with our Clinical Paleo Protein. This gives you an easy healthy meal replacement, packed with 21 grams of protein.

Almost everyone benefits from getting more protein, and a Clinical Paleo Protein shake makes upping your protein fast and simple. This is the best-tasting, easily absorbed protein powder you can buy.

You can get amazing Paleo shake recipes in our FREE e-book:
Anti-Inflammatory Shake Guide.

50 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2851659

Ultimate Antioxidant

Free radicals are a repercussion of normal cell metabolism, and your body should have the ability to clean them up and curb them from accumulating.

I say *should* because we live in a toxic world. Age, chronic stress, medication overuse, cigarette smoke (including second-hand smoke), and pollution are among the reasons I often see higher levels of free radicals among my patients.

When your body becomes overwhelmed, these free radicals accumulate and create oxidative stress, which plays a major part in the development of chronic and degenerative illness including cancer, autoimmune disorders, aging, cataract, rheumatoid arthritis, cardiovascular disease, and neurodegenerative diseases.[51]

The right nutrients can give your body a helping hand cleaning up that free-radical mess. For patients struggling with oxidative stress (that includes nearly everyone), I recommend Clinical Antioxidant.

This powerhouse synergistic supplement combines powerful herbs, spices, and other well-researched antioxidant compounds including:

- **Curcumin C3 Complex®** - the most potent source of this powerful anti-inflammatory antioxidant derived from the spice turmeric.
- **Acerola Cherry** – a powerful antioxidant.
- **Grape Seed Extract** – provides antimicrobial and hepatoprotective benefits; protects LDL cholesterol from oxidation.
- **Ginkgo biloba** – protects against mercury damage and your brain from cell phone-related electromagnetic radiation.

- **Full spectrum of the vitamin E family and a broad range of carotenoids** – for an overall powerful free radical scavenging effect.

51 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3614697/

Clinical Inflammatame

Chronic inflammation contributes to obesity and nearly every disease on the planet including cancer and autoimmune disorders.[52]

Beyond fish oil, I recommend Clinical Inflammatame to nearly all my patients because stress, diet, lack of sleep, and so many other factors ramp up chronic inflammation. You want everything in your arsenal to protect your body against inflammation, which can make or keep you overweight and sick if you leave it unchecked.

Among the ingredients in this powerful, synergistic, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant formula include:

- **Curcumin C3 Complex®**
- **Quercetin**
- **Boswellia**
- **Ginger extract**
- **Rutin**

Inflammatame is safe to use in high doses, yet powerful enough to provide results with as little as two capsules per day. For best results, take this product on an empty stomach, approximately one hour before meals or several hours after.

Digestive enzymes

Many patients complain about gas, bloating, constipation, and feeling stuffed after just eating a small amount of food. I always reply those things are *not* normal; instead, they are big flags that food is not digesting properly.

For your body to utilize vitamins and other nutrients from food, your body must digest them properly.

52 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3492709/

Among things that can deplete your body's naturally occurring digestive enzymes include age and chronic stress. I've learned most patients over age 30 or who have a lot of stress (that's nearly everyone!) aren't always digesting food properly.

A digestive enzyme supplement, which combines the most important enzymes for digestion of proteins, fats, and carbohydrates, can help break down and absorb your nutrients. They can help manage an array of digestive disorders, from lactose intolerance to cystic fibrosis.[53]

Clinical Digestive Enzyme is a vegetarian formula (of course it's also perfect for non-vegetarians!) that provides a proprietary enzyme blend to optimize food breakdown. Patients see almost immediate improvement with post-meal miseries they long dismissed as normal (but are anything but!).

Take Clinical Digestive Enzymes before meals. Some people will need to take two capsules, especially before a large meal. Start with one capsule and if gas, bloating, or other problems persist, increase to two capsules before meals.

These are just a few of the supplements that can benefit your health. To completely do justice to them all goes far beyond this book's scope. Taking unnecessary supplements can be expensive, time-consuming, and potentially do more harm than good. That's why I encourage everyone to confer with a knowledgeable healthcare professional to determine specific needs, therapeutic dosing, and other nutrient factors.

53 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4923703/

FAQS

Among my patients and online clients, these are among the questions I frequently receive about supplements.

I have a cabinet full of supplements, most of which I bought from drugstores and warehouse stores. I don't want to waste them. Can I finish them off and then start your supplements?

Now that you understand problems with commercial supplements, you'll understand why we recommend discontinuing yours (particularly if they aren't professional quality) and follow the guidelines here.

I struggle with chronic pain. What are your top supplement recommendations?

Along with the Core Four, we strongly recommend using Inflammatame.

How will my blood-thinning medication interact with the supplements?

For anyone on blood-thinning medications, we recommend conferring with your prescribing doctor before using any supplements. You will likely want to opt for Liquid Vitamin D Longevity without K, which provides an impressive 2,000 IUs of vitamin D per drop.

What's the proper dosage for the Core Four?

Keep in mind your body has specific requirements based on things like lifestyle, sleep patterns, stress level, exercise habits, gender, gene expression, current health issues, and diet.

While everyone has a unique biochemical makeup, I've found certain across-the-board consistencies for dosing. The following recommendations is for an adult who weighs around 140 – 180 pounds and is in good health.

If a patient has a specific health issue to reverse, improve, or avoid, I recommend specific dosages. For those situations, please schedule a visit with a healthcare practitioner.

In general, I recommend:

- **EPA/DHA.** 2,000 – 4,000 mg combined EPA/DHA daily, in the triglyceride form daily. That would be two to four Clinical Omega Concentrate soft gels.
- **Vitamin D.** 5,000 IUs in the summer and 10,000 IUs in the winter daily of vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol). (Personally I take 10,000 – 20,000 IUs daily year round without a problem and my blood levels are typically around 80ng/ml.) Keep in mind Clinical Complete Multi provides 1,000 IUs of vitamin D.
- **Multivitamin/mineral.** If you are taking Clinical Complete Multivitamin, take six capsules daily, preferably divided among your meals. For other professional brands, please follow their recommendations.
- **Magnesium.** 600 – 1,200 mg daily. Gradually increase your dose. Begin with 300 mg (two capsules of Clinical Magnesium Complete) and then increase by about 300 mg a week until you reach 1,200 mg. Keep in mind Clinical Complete Multi provides 200 mg of magnesium.

Why should I take additional magnesium and vitamin D when they are included in your multivitamin-mineral?

Magnesium is a very bulky mineral, and we couldn't fit optimal amounts into our Clinical Complete Multivitamin. Likewise, while Clinical Complete Multivitamin provides 1,000 IUs of vitamin D, we find most patients do well on higher doses. Therefore, we recommend these two supplements separately, even though you will get some magnesium and vitamin D in our Clinical Complete Multivitamin.

I took too much magnesium and had a "bathroom issue." Should I be concerned, and what's the best way to prevent that from happening again?

Too much magnesium at once can create loose stools and other discomforts. If that happens, simply back off your dose.

I'm concerned about how [prescription drug] might interact with my supplements. How should I proceed?

Even though supplements are "packaged" nutrients, they can interact with prescription drugs.

Please consult with a qualified health professional to customize your nutritional regimen and avoid drug-nutrient interactions.

What's the difference between supplements and medications?

As a general overview, whereas medications force a reaction in your body, supplements work with and support your body. A doctor or other healthcare professional might prescribe (hence the word "prescription") a medication that a licensed pharmacist would fill.

Supplements, on the other hand, would be recommended but not prescribed by healthcare professionals (not just doctors). Drug manufacturers may claim their product will cure, treat, or prevent disease. Dietary supplements cannot make those claims.

I travel a lot and eat out quite often. How can I best organize my supplements?

Planning ahead and always making sure you have your supplements with you will ensure you take them. If necessary, set your smartphone or another device to remind you to take supplements with meals. Over time, this will become second nature. To organize supplements, we recommend pill organizers, plastic baggies, or even a small tackle box.

I found the fish oil supplement a little hard to swallow. Do you have any recommendations about how to get these supplements down more easily?

Please watch Dr. Gala's video on how to take supplements.

We recommend taking supplements one pill at a time with a bite of food. This is not a finishing contest, so please don't try to swallow everything at once. When you swallow, keep your chin *down* rather than your head back.

When should I take my supplements

For the most part, and unless I've noted otherwise, you'll want to take supplements with meals. Especially with larger doses, we recommend dividing them among all your meals.

YOUR SUPPLEMENT GUIDE

This Guide Helps You Navigate the Supplement Industry

LEARN:

- Why nutritional supplements are a must
- When a bargain isn't a bargain
- Which supplements are effective and why
- The core supplements I believe everyone should be taking

Dr. Gala, D.C.

Dr. Gala and his team help clients reverse chronic health issues in 1-8 months while concurrently reducing or completely eliminating all prescription medications. He has helped over 2,500 clients including published research on reversing endocrine disorders. He has been featured on NBC, CBS and asked to be the keynote speaker at hospitals and medical teaching facilities. He is sought after for 3rd party authenticating for medical research prior to publication. He is the founder and Medical Director of Complete Care Health Centers.