

understanding multivitamins

with Lauren Moller-Seat, RDN

THERE IS NO STANDARD FORMULA for multivitamins/minerals (MVI/MVM). Nutritional needs depend on age, gender, health status, life stage, etc. Except for women who are or may become pregnant (who likely need a prenatal vitamin), the research is unclear as to whether there is a benefit or any potential risks associated with taking a multivitamin long term.

While we don't fully understand the symbiotic, or interactive, effect of foods,

research supports that there is an advantage to getting nutrients from food sources instead of pills. For your best health, make it a goal to work toward a balanced diet that meets your nutritional needs.

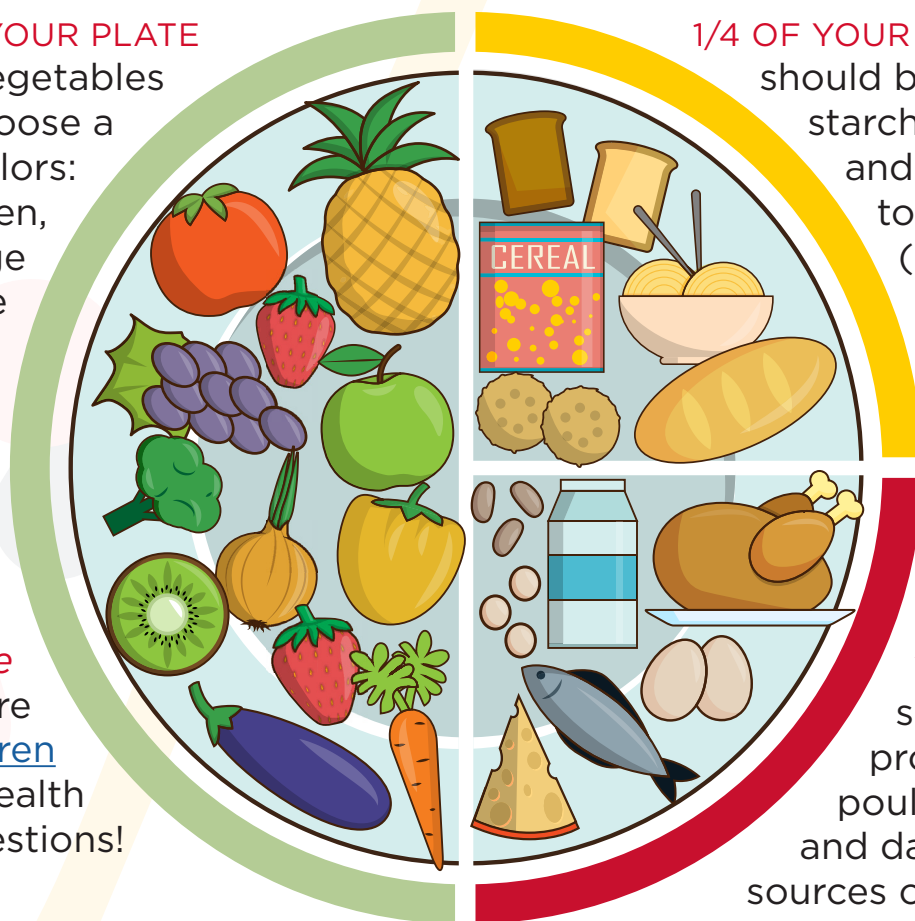
If you are malnourished, having difficulty eating, or have been advised by your doctor to take a multivitamin, be sure to choose wisely, as not all multivitamins are created equal.

Eat a balanced plate for healthy vitamin intake

HALF YOUR PLATE

should be vegetables and fruits. Choose a variety of colors: purple, green, yellow, orange and red are the best choices. Be sure to choose non-starchy vegetables.

Need some advice? Be sure to ask [Lauren](#) for some health suggestions!



1/4 OF YOUR PLATE

should be whole grains, starchy vegetables and legumes. Try to avoid refined (white) grains and choose whole (brown) grains instead.

1/4 OF YOUR PLATE

should be proteins. Fish, poultry, nuts and dairy are ideal sources of protein.

Information to Consider When Choosing a Multivitamin



- **There are no set or agreed-upon standards** for what a multivitamin should include—and some high-potency vitamins may exceed the Safe Upper Limits (or SULs) set by the [Food and Nutrition Board](#).
- **Multivitamins** generally do not provide large amounts of calcium, magnesium or potassium.
- **Gummy vitamins** are more likely to contain much more of an ingredient than listed on the label. Most gummies do not contain iron and tend to be more expensive. If you have difficulty swallowing pills, try a chewable multivitamin instead.

Recommended Multivitamins (MVIs), If Needed

Recommended* MVI for General Adult	Recommended* MVI for Adults 50+	Recommended* MVI for Women
<p>Kirkland Signature (Costco) Daily Multi</p> <p>Contains only 400 IU of Vit D (less than daily requirement of 600 IU for adults up to age 70 or 800 IU for adults >70) – 200mg calcium and 18mg iron</p>	<p>Equate (Walmart) Complete Multivitamin 50+</p> <p><i>NOTE:</i> These are identical to Up & Up (Target) Adults 50+ Multivitamin or Centrum Silver, which are more expensive and provide no iron. Centrum Silver Chewables do <u>not</u> provide as much vitamin D as the tablets (400 vs 1000 IU) and are much more expensive.</p>	<p>Up & Up (Target) Women's Daily Multivitamin</p> <p>Contains 380mg calcium, 18mg iron</p> <p>Bayer One a Day Women's Formula</p> <p>Contains 380mg calcium, 18mg iron</p>
<p>*These recommendations are based on third-party testing conducted by Consumer Lab.</p>		

Editor's note: The information provided in this newsletter is for educational purposes only. Please speak with your health care team about your specific dietary and health needs.