

The Continued Battle Food vs. Supplements

What are Dietary Supplements?

- According to the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA) of 1994, a dietary supplement is taken by mouth and contains a “dietary ingredient” intended to supplement the diet.
- Dietary ingredients in these products may include: vitamins, minerals, herbs or other botanicals, amino acids, and substances such as enzymes, organ tissues, glandulars, and metabolites.
- Dietary supplements were not intended to treat, cure, diagnosis or prevent any medical condition and should **NOT** be labeled as such.



The Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

- Currently there is no standard of practice for the manufacturing of dietary supplements. Identity, purity, quality, strength and composition of supplements is left in the hands of the manufacturer.
- The manufacturer of any supplement is not required to register or have a supplement pre-approved before the supplement hits the market.
- FDA will monitor the marketplace for products that may be unsafe or make misleading claims by obtaining information of supplement manufacturers, the internet, consumer complaints, occasional laboratory analysis, adverse events associated with the use of a supplement that has been reported to the agency
- Manufacturers are responsible for notifying the FDA if they intend to market a dietary supplement that contains a “new dietary ingredient” which was not sold in the U.S. before October, 15 1994.

Reading a Supplement Label: What is Required?

- **General information:**
 - Product name including the word ‘supplement’
 - Name and location of manufacturer, packer or distributor
 - Directions for use
- **Supplement fact panel includes:**
 - Serving size, amount per serving, and percent daily value, if determined
 - List of dietary ingredients
 - Botanicals should include the scientific name of the plant and the part used in making the supplement (ex. root, stem or petal).
 - If the manufacturer developed a supplement using a special blend or procedure, the ingredients used should be listed from highest weight to lowest weight.
- **Other ingredients:**
 - Any filler, artificial flavor, color or sweetener, or binder must be listed from highest weight to lowest weight.

Supplement Facts	
Serving Size 1 Capsule	
Amount Per Capsule	% Daily Value
Calories 20	
Calories from Fat 20	
Total Fat 2 g	3%*
Saturated Fat 0.5 g	3%*
Polyunsaturated Fat 1 g	†
Monounsaturated Fat 0.5 g	†
Vitamin A 4250 IU	85%
Vitamin D 425 IU	106%
Omega-3 fatty acids 0.5 g †	

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.
† Daily Value not established.

Ingredients: Cod liver oil, gelatin, water, and glycerin.

Supplement vs. Food:

The following table shows a comparison between calcium supplements and several calcium containing foods. The Recommended Daily Allowance for calcium for both men and women ages 19-30 is 1000mg.

	Viactiv®	Caltrate®	Milk	Yogurt	Cheese
1 Serving	1 chew	1 tablet	1 cup	8 oz	1.5 oz. (2 slices)
Amount of Calcium per Serving	500mg	600mg	300mg	350mg	300mg

Savvy Supplement Use:

- Read the label and know all of the ingredients.
- Call the manufacturer to find out more information about the supplement.
- Know the active ingredient and the percentage that the supplement will provide.
- Avoid 'megadose' formulas—more does not always equal better. High levels of vitamins and minerals in the body can cause major medical complications.
- Monitor prescription and over-the-counter drugs. Herbal supplements can interact harmfully with other drugs and some should not be taken before surgery due to harmful side effects.
- Watch out for "too good to be true" claims.
- Monitor expiration dates. Supplements can become less effective over time. If a supplement has expired do not use it and do not buy supplements without an expiration date.
- Store all supplements safely, preferably in a dry, cool place. Environmental conditions can cause a chemical change in supplements if not stored properly.

Questions to Ask Yourself:

- Do I need the supplement?
- Do I know that what is stated on the label is actually in the bottle?

You Might Need A Supplement If You...

- Do not get your required servings from the 5 food groups
- Are a vegetarian
- Consume less than 1200 calories a day
- Have a medical condition that affects how your body absorbs, uses or excretes nutrients
- Are a postmenopausal woman
- Are a woman with heavy menstrual bleeding
- Are pregnant or trying to become pregnant
- Smoke
- Drink excessively



Evaluating Supplements:

When evaluating supplements it is important to note if any studies have been completed using the supplement. The following websites can help you evaluate the use of dietary supplements.

- <http://ods.od.nih.gov/>
- <http://www.supplementwatch.com/>
- <http://nccam.nih.gov/health/supplements.htm>
- <http://www.mayoclinic.com>
- <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/supplmnt.html>

