

Building Optimal Health and Performance

WOMEN'S HEALTH

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VITAMINS AND MINERALS



DEXPANTHENOL (VITAMIN B5)

What it is: Dexpantenol or vitamin B5 is a water-soluble vitamin, meaning

the body does not store it. We need to consume it daily to replenish supplies.

What it does: Vitamin B5 is required to convert food (carbohydrates, proteins and lipids) into usable energy. It is also essential for healthy skin. It is critical for the manufacturing of sex hormones produced in the adrenal glands and is important for maintaining a healthy digestive tract.

Why you might need it: Used for dietary deficiencies or decreased absorption due to destruction of gastrointestinal flora, such as from antibiotic use. Can be used to enhance the immune system, for hormonal balance, to treat premenstrual syndrome, to protect against mental and physical stress and reduce aging and fatigue.

Who shouldn't use this: Avoid if you are hypersensitive to supplements. Avoid consuming B-vitamins in the evening as they can increase energy and disrupt sleep.

What happens if you take too much: Can lead to diarrhea.

Where to get it: Rich sources include cauliflower, kale, broccoli, tomatoes, avocado, legumes, lentils, egg yolks, sweet potatoes, sunflower seeds and animal protein.

IMPACT Expert Picks: Genestra Pantothenic Acid, AOR Pantethine, Thorne Stress B complex.



IRON

What it is: Iron is an essential micromineral, also called a trace mineral.

There are two types of iron:

heme iron is attached to a protein in blood cells that delivers oxygen. It is found only in meat, fish and poultry (MFP) and is highly absorbable.

Non-heme is attached to components in fruit, vegetables, nuts, grains and MFP.

Strong stomach acid, citrus fruit and certain animal proteins assist absorbability.

What it does: Iron is required for oxygenation of tissues, energy creation, immune response, cognitive performance, neurotransmitter synthesis and metabolism in the liver.

Why you might need it: If you have iron deficiency due to anemia or GI bleeding; if you are a vegetarian or vegan; if menstruation is heavy; if you are pregnant, elderly or have renal failure, use antacids or if you abuse alcohol.

Who shouldn't use this: Those with anemia from another source, chronic inflammation, current systemic infection or hereditary hemochromatosis.

What happens if you take too much: Hemochromatosis or hemosiderosis, a potentially lethal condition from iron accumulation.

Where to get it: Chicken liver, soybeans, lentils, canned oysters, beef liver, kidney beans, baked beans, blackstrap molasses.

IMPACT Expert Picks: Feramax 150, Feosol, Floradix.



MAGNESIUM

What it is: Magnesium is an essential mineral to all living cells. Up to 50 percent of the magnesium in

the body is present in the bone. Magnesium glycinate, taken orally, is preferred because it is highly absorbable and is less likely to cause loose stools or diarrhea.

What it does: Magnesium is important for normal bone structure and plays an essential role in more than 300 fundamental cellular reactions. Magnesium is a natural muscle relaxant.

Why you might need it: Magnesium can be used for preventing premenstrual migraine, for relieving premenstrual mood changes and fluid retention. Magnesium is important for supporting bone health.

Who shouldn't use this: People with low blood pressure or reduced kidney function should use caution if taking magnesium.

What happens if you take too much: Higher doses can cause loose stools and

diarrhea, which can lead to fluid and electrolyte imbalances.

Where to get it: Green leafy vegetables such as spinach, kale and collard greens, broccoli, squash, pumpkin seeds, almonds.

IMPACT Expert Picks: Douglas Lab Magnesium Glycinate, Rx Balance Magnesium Bisglycinate, CanPrev Magnesium BisGlycinate.



P5P (VITAMIN B6)

What it is: Pyridoxal-5-phosphate (P5P) is the biologically active

form of vitamin B6.

What it does: P5P is essential in the conversion of food (protein, carbohydrate and fats) into energy for the body to use. It is an essential co-factor in reactions involving the synthesis of neurotransmitters and red blood cells. P5P has been shown to decrease symptoms associated with PMS, including depression. It has shown effectiveness in reducing morning sickness with pregnancy.

Why you might need it: PMS, carpal tunnel syndrome, elevated homocysteine, nausea of pregnancy.

Who shouldn't use this: Those taking levodopa (B6/P5P decreases effectiveness of drug)

What happens if you take too much: Long-term high doses of pyridoxine (not P5P) have been associated with peripheral neuropathy — disease of the peripheral nervous system.

Where to get it: Beef, poultry, starchy vegetables and non-citrus fruits.

IMPACT Expert Picks: AOR P5P, Thorne Pyridoxine-5-Phosphate.



PHYTOESTROGENS

What it is: Phytoestrogens are naturally occurring plant-based compounds that are structurally

similar to estrogen. They can have beneficial medicinal qualities or, in the case of their synthetic counterparts such as PCBs,

thalates and BPA, can cause unwanted endocrine disruption in the body.

What it does: Phytoestrogens have the ability to regulate estrogen activity in the body. They have a modest binding affinity and activity for estrogen receptors. If there is an estrogen dominance present, the phytoestrogens will help displace the stronger binding estrogens and reduce the overall activity of estrogen in the body. On the other hand, if there is an underwhelming amount of estrogen activity present (such as a menopausal state), phytoestrogens will increase the estrogen activity in the body.

Why you might need it: Females who have dysmenorrhea or premenstrual symptoms that are the result of excess estrogen. Symptomatic perimenopausal or menopausal women. Older individuals looking to improve cardiovascular or bone health benefits. Phytoestrogens may play a role in reducing the risk of estrogen-positive cancers.

Who shouldn't use this: Women being treated for breast or ovarian cancer who are taking tamoxifen or aromatase inhibitors should avoid phytoestrogens. Caution should be used in women who are pregnant, nursing or attempting to become pregnant.

What happens if you take too much: Most important is to avoid excess contact with harmful synthetic xenoestrogens. Unlike phytoestrogens, these synthetic estrogens have a strong binding affinity that can result in overactivation of estrogen receptors. Too much phytoestrogen consumption can result in disruption of lactation, premature development in puberty and reduced fertility.

Where to get it: Food sources such as soybeans, fenugreek seeds, flax, lentils, burdock, hops (beer), red clover tops, alfalfa.

IMPACT Expert Picks: Organic non-GMO soybeans, licorice tea, burdock tea, Soy Isoflavones (Natural Factors).



SILICA

What it is: A mineral essential for bone and collagen formation.

What it does: Silica is involved in the production of collagen, which is required in the production of healthy bones, skin, hair and nails. Diets higher in silicon, as well as supplementation with silica, have been associated with higher bone mineral density. Silica supplementation has been

shown to improve hair, skin and nail quality in women.

Why you might need it: Conditions such as osteoporosis or osteopenia, as well as those wishing to improve the integrity of their hair and nails.

Who shouldn't use this: Those with compromised kidney function.

What happens if you take too much: Long-term use of high doses, such as those found in medications, can lead to kidney damage or the formation of kidney stones.

Where to get it: Whole grains, fruits, vegetables and legumes.

IMPACT Expert Picks: Biosil Preferred Nutrition.

HERBALS



ACTEA RACEMOSA (BLACK COHOSH)

What it is: A plant where the root and rhizome are traditionally used for herbal medicine, especially for women's health.

What it does: Some studies show that it acts as a phytoestrogen and selective estrogen receptor modulator (SERM). Other studies dispute these findings, so there is controversy over the mechanism of action. May have anti-inflammatory properties that can be used for pain management.

Why you might need it: To help with menopausal symptoms such as hot flashes. Has been used in Germany and Europe for premenstrual discomfort and perimenopausal symptoms.

Who shouldn't use this: Should not be used during pregnancy or while breastfeeding. Should not be used in cases of a hormone-dependant cancer. Should not be used if allergic to black cohosh or the buttercup (ranunculaceae) family.

What happens if you take too much: May cause liver toxicity if taken in high doses for a long period of time. May cause headaches and stomach upset, and might increase the effects of Tamoxifen. An overdose might cause nausea, vomiting, dizziness and affect the nervous system.

Where to get it: A standardized extract made from the root or rhizome. Found in tablet, capsule or tincture form.

IMPACT Expert Picks: Avicenna Actaea racemosa tincture, Black Cohosh Preferred Nutrition, St. Francis Black Cohosh.

THE IMPACT MAGAZINE GUIDE TO

NATURAL HEALTH PRODUCTS

IS COMPILED WITH THE EXPERT ASSISTANCE OF:



Dr. Meaghan McCollum is a naturopathic doctor in Calgary, with a practice focused on sports medicine.



Dr. Ludovic Brunel is a naturopathic doctor who has been actively involved in the dietary supplement industry, formulating products and educating the public since 2004.



Dr. Kyley Hunt is a naturopathic doctor practicing in Calgary. Her practice focuses on hormones, stress balancing, optimized nutrition and therapies such as neural and Bowen that address pain and injury while optimizing performance.



Dr. Melina Roberts is a naturopathic doctor and clinic director of Advanced Naturopathic Medical Centre in Calgary, is a leading authority in the field of naturopathic medicine specializing in uncovering root causes of problems, digestive issues, hormonal balancing and chronic disease.



Dr. Rob Roth is a naturopathic doctor and herbalist practicing in Calgary, who focuses on pain management and injury rehabilitation.



Dr. Thara Vayali is a rigorous researcher, creative teacher and problem solver. Her naturopathic practice is a blend of skilled diagnostics, intelligent biomechanics and health education. She practices in Vancouver.

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RUBUS IDAEUS
 (RED RASPBERRY LEAF)

What it is: The leaves of the garden raspberry plant.

What it does: Believed to have tonifying, smooth muscle relaxant effects on the uterus, although there are no studies to confirm this.

Why you might need it: Traditionally used in folklore for menstrual cramps and to assist during pregnancy and labour.

Who shouldn't use this: Not enough evidence to determine. Not to be used early in pregnancy, or high-risk pregnancy.

What happens if you take too much: Insufficient information available.

Where to get it: An organic garden.

IMPACT Expert Picks: Best obtained from a certified herbalist; St. Francis Red Raspberry.



VIBURNUM OPULUS
 (CRAMP BARK)

What it is: Ornamental plant with bark tradition-ally used for cramps.

What it does: Lack of evidence, but traditionally used as an antispasmodic in people suffering from cramps.

Why you might need it: Menstrual cramps or pain, arthritic cramps, asthma, stomach ulcers and colic. The herb was shown to have antioxidant activity and to reduce blood pressure in animals.

Who shouldn't use this: Patients on immunomodulators or high blood pressure medication.

What happens if you take too much: Insufficient information available.

Where to get it: From bark of the plant.

IMPACT Expert Picks: Tincture from herbalist or naturopathic doctor; St. Francis Herb Farm.



VITEX AGNUS-CASTUS
 (CHASTE TREE)

What it is: The berries of a shrub that is indigenous to southern Europe and central Asia.

What it does: Studies have shown that chaste tree inhibits the secretion of prolactin by binding dopamine receptors and indirectly increases progesterone. Some studies show that chaste tree berries have an active phytoestrogen, but that it does not affect FSH or LH levels.

Why you might need it: To help balance menstrual cycles, premenstrual syndrome, infertility, hyperprolactinemia and, in some cases, to treat acne.

Who shouldn't use this: Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding. Women who are going through in-vitro fertilization. Should be avoided by those on progesterone drugs, contraceptive pills, dopamine agonists or hormone-replacement therapy.

What happens if you take too much: Generally well tolerated. Mild skin reactions, headaches and digestive complaints have been reported.

Where to get it: Dried or fresh berries for tea, or standardized into tablet, capsule or a liquid extract.

IMPACT Expert Picks: Chaste Tree — Medi Herb, Vitex Preferred Nutrition. ■