

# supplements

to supplement or not



**Supplements are plentiful!** The question is, do you need one? There are certain situations where taking a supplement is necessary. Just remember that a supplement never corrects a poor diet.

## YOU MIGHT CONSIDER A SUPPLEMENT IF YOU ARE:

- **A SMOKER:** Along with the bad stuff we know about smoking, it robs your body of Vitamin C. You need more...at least 100 mg/ day.
- **A STRICT VEGETARIAN:** You can choose foods fortified with B12 and or you might need a supplement.
- **TAKING ORAL CONTRACEPTIVE AGENTS (OCA):** Your B6 levels may need to be monitored and increased.
- **FEELING FATIGUED AND STRESSED.** *What college student isn't?* A strong dose of healthy eating a good night's sleep is the best supplement here, but taking a one a day doesn't hurt.

## IF YOU CHOOSE A SUPPLEMENT FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES FOR BEST RESULTS:

- **CHOOSE A VITAMIN/MINERAL COMBO.** That way you can avoid disturbing the delicate balance that makes vitamins and minerals work best. In certain situations, you may need more than a standard supplement provides.
- **ONE HUNDRED PERCENT IS ENOUGH.** Since it's possible to get toxic amounts of some vitamins and minerals, play it safe and stay with those that are about 100 percent of the standard. More is not better and may actually be unsafe for certain vitamins, such as vitamin A, calcium, folic acid, or vitamin D.
- **YOU DON'T ALWAYS GET WHAT YOU WANT...OR PAY FOR.** Natural or synthetic generally doesn't matter, because your body can't recognize whether a supplement was manufactured in a lab or came from a natural source.
- **TIMING IS EVERYTHING.** It's best to take supplements with meals. If you're taking a multivitamin with iron, don't take extra calcium at the same time. Instead, take the calcium at bedtime.
- **CHECK THE EXPIRATION DATE.** Vitamins do lose their potency, so buy the one with the longest shelf life.
- **FOOD FIRST.** All of the expensive supplements in the store won't replace a healthy diet.