



## 20 Little-Known Reasons to Take a Daily Multivitamin

Most everyone knows that taking a quality, daily multivitamin and mineral supplement can help protect against many degenerative disorders such as heart disease and osteoporosis, as well as run-of-the-mill illnesses like infections or the common cold.

Here are 20 other lesser-known ways a daily multivitamin can help promote optimal health and well-being.

1. **Support healthy aging.** As you get older, your body has a harder time absorbing nutrients from food. At the same time, your nutritional needs increase.
2. **Correct nutritional deficiencies caused by prescription drugs and surgery and nutritionally wasting health conditions such as diabetes.** Along with aging, there are several other factors that can make you more susceptible to nutritional deficiencies, including these common culprits.
3. **Improve short-term memory.** According to a meta-analysis of 10 randomized, placebo-controlled trials, taking a daily multivitamin can result in improvements in short-term memory.
4. **Boost energy levels.** Several studies have demonstrated that taking a daily multivitamin and mineral supplement is associated with increased energy levels.
5. **Detoxify your body.** The robust levels of minerals, antioxidants and B-complex vitamins present in a high-quality daily multivitamin help clear toxins from the body, facilitate enzymatic reactions required for detoxification, and keep the liver and other organs in tip-top shape.
6. **Maintain muscle strength.** Muscle aging can be associated with free radical damage, and an antioxidant-rich daily multivitamin can help keep free radicals in check. Vitamin D has also been shown to improve muscle strength in older people.
7. **Prevent falls.** Numerous studies have found that a daily multivitamin and mineral supplement — particularly one with therapeutic dosages of vitamin D (at least 1,000 IU) and calcium (1,000 mg)—can improve balance and reduce risk of falls.
8. **Restore sense of smell.** Anosmia, the inability to detect odors, can be caused by a deficiency of zinc. Low levels of vitamins B12 and A along with copper are also associated with changes in sense of smell (and taste).
9. **Protect against hearing loss.** Several studies have found a correlation between hearing loss and deficiencies in B-complex vitamins. A more recent study also found that people with elevated homocysteine

levels had a 64 percent increased risk of hearing loss, and the best way to lower homocysteine levels is with B-complex vitamins.

10. **Improve your skin.** Research has shown that beta-carotene and vitamins C and E are important for maintaining healthy, younger-looking skin.
11. **Prevent asthma and allergies.** People with asthma and those prone to allergies often have depleted levels of vitamin C, zinc, selenium and magnesium.
12. **Prevent diabetes complications.** Diabetes is a nutritionally-wasting condition, putting those who have it at dramatically increased risk of other problems (or complications)—especially ones that affect the eyes, nerves, blood vessels, kidneys and extremities. The best way to prevent these complications is by taking a potent, daily multivitamin and mineral supplement.
13. **Boost mood.** Many studies have found that a daily multivitamin has positive effects on mood and emotional well-being.
14. **Manage Stress.** Research has shown that a daily multivitamin—particularly one containing therapeutic dosages of B-complex vitamins—can help reduce stress and anxiety.
15. **Enhance weight loss.** A randomized, double-blind study of obese women found that those taking a daily multivitamin and mineral supplement lost an average of 7.9 pounds, compared to 2 pounds for those taking calcium and half a pound in the placebo group.
16. **Improve sexual function.** The organs and glands that are responsive to sexual hormones are particularly vulnerable to free radical damage, so taking an antioxidant-rich daily multivitamin can help ensure peak performance and function.
17. **Prevent dry eyes.** Most people know that vitamins, especially antioxidants, are essential for maintaining overall vision. But by the time you reach age 65, a lifetime of free radical damage has taken its toll, and our eyes produce (on average) 40 percent less lubrication. That's why shoring up on these crucial nutrients can help correct or prevent the problem from developing in the first place.
18. **Stop telomere erosion.** Chromosomes are tightly coiled, rod-like structures made up of proteins and one double-helix-shaped molecule of DNA encoded with your genome: the blueprints for your growth, development and physiological function. And at the tips of every chromosome are protective "caps" called telomeres, which naturally get shorter as we age. Research has found that taking a daily multivitamin can help slow and even reverse this erosion.
19. **Reduce cravings for alcohol.** Research suggests that people who have problems with alcohol can often gain better control over their drinking by making sure they have adequate levels of B-complex vitamins, calcium and magnesium.
20. **Prevent dental problems.** Vitamin C plays a key role in the prevention of gum disease, as it helps maintain the integrity of the supporting structures of the oral tissues. Other antioxidants, including vitamins A and E as well as selenium, have also been shown to improve the health of the gums. Perhaps even more important is zinc. This mineral stabilizes cellular membranes and inhibits plaque growth. Deficiencies in both zinc and vitamin A are also common in patients with periodontal disease.