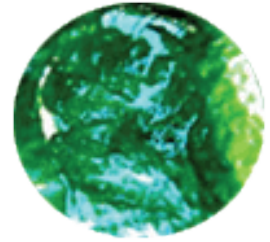


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To supplement or not to supplement?

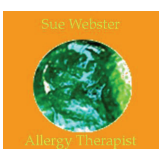
I'm often asked why I occasionally encourage clients to take certain supplements to their diet, often in the form of vitamins or minerals. Shouldn't we be getting all we need from our diet instead? Well, of course we should - where that is possible. There are several reasons why it may be difficult to ensure we obtain all our nutrients from the food we eat:

- The typical western diet (pizza, pasta, bread!!) tends to include convenience and processed foods which are low in micro-nutrients like vitamins and minerals.
- Times of stress require higher levels of these nutrients than the Recommended Daily Amount (RDA) allows for. Western life is very stressful!!
- Our food is generally grown with the use of artificial fertilizers and pesticides which take many essential minerals from the soil. This means that our fruit and vegetables do not contain them. Even organic produce might still have been grown in poor quality soil meaning minimal mineral uptake!

The Recommended Daily Amount of vitamins and minerals assumes everyone has a healthy body which just needs 'topping up' each day. After times of illness, long term stress/anxiety or if we consume alcohol or smoke cigarettes the body needs and uses many times the RDA to put things right.

The truth is that the RDA of micro-nutrients like vitamins and minerals is a bare minimum of what is required. Vitamin C for example has an RDA in the UK of 60mg daily (equivalent to 2 oranges). Humans do not make Vitamin C in their bodies but most other mammals do and our nearest evolutionary neighbours, for example gorillas and chimpanzees, make *thousands* of milligrams of Vitamin C in their bodies every day. If that is so, how come we only need 60mg? Vitamin C is one micronutrient I always suggest people supplement for this reason. IBS sufferers will also be short of Vitamin B complex because the production of this vitamin complex will be reduced in a digestive tract that is under par!

Generally speaking it is wise for everyone to supplement their daily diet with a multi-vitamin/mineral. Even the World Health Organisation and the prestigious Harvard Medical School are now saying this is a sensible precaution. If you want some advice about which products to buy (some are definitely better than others!) do give me a call!!



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