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Natural vs. synthetic nutrients

Natural nutrients are from whole food sources in the diet. These contain naturally occurring vitamins, enzymes, coenzymes, minerals, and antioxidants. All of these substances must be present (and in correct amounts) in order for the body to optimally utilize them.

A synthetic nutrient is a chemically pure substance that is commercially manufactured. It is an artificial “replica” of a specific isolated part of a vitamin (e.g., ascorbic acid in vitamin C) and does not include all of the other essential vitamin components. In order to work properly in the body, synthetic nutrients they must be combined with the other natural components (e.g., enzyme, coenzymes, etc.). These components come from the body’s reserves. Long term use may lead to imbalances and deficiencies of these components in the body which may contribute to chronic disease.¹ It’s also unclear how well (or not) synthetic nutrients are absorbed by the body.²

The National Institute of Health recommends that, in order to get all the nutrients needed, individuals eat a balanced diet of whole foods.³ A study published on TuftsNow in 2019 compared 27,000 U.S. adults ages 20 and older and was done to evaluate artificial dietary supplement use and death from all causes, cardiovascular disease (CVD), and cancer. The researchers found that there was a lower risk of death overall when nutrients in the diet were limited to foods and without synthetic supplements.⁴

However, for certain people with certain conditions, taking a synthetic nutritional supplement may be temporarily helpful.²

What can we do to improve our nutrition? Take whole food supplements!

Most Americans eat a diet high in processed and refined foods often high in calories but with limited nutritional value. For those eating a more balanced diet, there are often nutritional deficiencies because of the reduced nutrients in the food supply. Many symptoms of health issues are caused (at least in part) by nutritional deficiencies.

“A whole food supplement is a complex formula that includes whole food-based plant ingredients, plant and animal extracts, desiccates, or synthetic ingredients as required to create the best dietary supplement for each health indication.”⁵

If processed correctly, whole food supplements retain their nutritional value. The components have a high degree of bioavailability – meaning they are easily digested, absorbed, and metabolized. Taking whole food supplements can help to facilitate the healing process by providing the body with proper nutrients.

¹ *The Real Truth about Vitamins & Anti-oxidants*, DeCava, Judith A., CNC, LNC, 2nd edition, 2006, Selene River Press

² [Synthetic vs Natural Nutrients: Does it Matter?](#)

³ <https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/vitamins-and-minerals>

⁴ [Nutrients from food, not supplements, linked to lower risks of death, cancer | Tufts Now](#)

⁵ <https://www.standardprocess.com/about-us/quality/whole-food-philosophy>