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## How to Select a Good Vitamin and Mineral Supplement

### 1. Is the supplement safe to take?

Multi-vitamin supplements are a combination of ingredients and can contain substances that are not listed on the label. Science-based nutrition companies will test ingredients for contaminants such as E. coli, salmonella, pesticides, steroids, stimulants and other banned substances. In addition, vitamins and minerals can contain toxic levels from inconsistencies in the strength of raw materials. Make sure the nutrition company tests every batch of pills to confirm that the strength and purity are consistent and safe.

### 2. Am I getting what's on the label?

To insure that what's on the label (and only what's on the label) is in the bottle, only buy products that adhere to Pharmaceutical Good Manufacturing Process (GMP). These are the rigorous standards that govern the production of prescription and over-the-counter medications. Most vitamins are manufactured under FDA guidelines only, which do not ensure that what is on the label is in the bottle.

### 3. Does the supplement get absorbed?

A multi-vitamin or mineral is only as good as its ability to be absorbed and utilized in the body. It is important to choose supplements that meet U.S. Pharmacopeia standards for disintegration and dissolution. Look for a supplement that uses minerals in chelated form, so you can be sure that your body will absorb them. Also, be sure that there is an expiration date indicating when the supplement may no longer meet USP standards of quality and strength.

### 4. Is the company science-based and credible?

Is the company research-based and science-focused? Who is the formulator of the products? Do you know that by ordering as few as 100 bottles, anyone can have their own vitamin brand? Just a few manufacturers produce most of the vitamins sold – several thousand companies. Look for a company that manufactures their own products.

Look for a company that is tested and certified by independent agencies such as NSF International, Consumer Labs or Nutrisearch Inc.

\*\*\*Recommend **The Nutrisearch Comparative Guide to Nutritional Supplements** by Lyle MacWilliam for a third-party analysis of over 1600 products available in the U.S. and Canada

