

Do I need to take dietary supplements?

It's possible to meet your nutrient needs by eating a variety of healthy foods, but, as a busy college student, we know that's not easy. If you're wondering if a supplement is right for you, answer these questions to find out if you're covering the basics.

Am I eating enough fruits and vegetables?

What's considered enough? For adults ages 19 to 30, it's 2 cups of fruit and about 2 1/2 cups of vegetables per day. If you aren't meeting these recommendations, one multivitamin/mineral supplement per day can help close the gap.

Am I eating at least 3 servings of dairy daily?

A single serving of dairy is equal to 1 cup of milk, yogurt, or soy milk, 1 1/2 ounces of natural cheese or 2 ounces of processed cheese. Not close to meeting these recommendations? Consider taking two 500 milligram calcium supplements daily, at least 4 hours apart.

Do I eat 2 servings of fatty fish each week?

Salmon, tuna, trout, sardines, and herring are all examples of fatty fish

that have omega-3 fatty acids, which our bodies can't produce on their own. Omega-3s have powerful anti-inflammatory properties and are excellent for brain health. If you aren't hitting 2 servings (about 7 ounces total) a week, consider a fish oil supplement. Read the label for the amount of omega-3s (EPA and DHA) per serving. A 500 milligram omega-3 supplement per day is the equivalent to 2 servings of fish per week.

Am I feeling unusually stressed, tired, sad, or cranky?

These symptoms could be caused by a number of things, but one unexpected contributor could be vitamin D deficiency. While research is on-going as to the specific impact on mood, we know that vitamin D receptors have been located in bone, skeletal muscle, immune cells, and other tissues including the brain, prostate, breast, and colon for a potentially broad health impact. We get vitamin D from sun exposure and from some, but few, foods. The only way to tell whether you're deficient is by a blood test, so make an appointment with your doctor before taking a vitamin D supplement.



CAMPUS HEALTH

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Food and nutrition services (including healthy eating, cooking skills, weight management, digestive problems, hormonal and cardiovascular diseases, and eating disorders) are offered year-round at Campus Health. Call (520) 621-6483 to make an appointment.