

## SUPPLEMENTS! Good or Not?



By The Green Ward

## WESTERN DIET

The average Western diet has progressively become unhealthy in the last 50 years.

The result is a lack of essential nutrients we need in order to nourish ourselves such as:

- Iron,
- Calcium,
- Potassium,
- Magnesium,
- Vitamins A, C, And D



From this



To this!

***"We must understand  
how to nourish ourselves  
with real food"***

## STRAIGHT FROM A PILL

It's no surprise, therefore, that we turn to a supplement to get the nutrition we know we need. Many of us are increasingly relying on them not just to make up for the short fall, but also because we hope to give ourselves an extra health boost; a safeguard against disease!



Getting our nutrients straight from a pill seems an easy and straight forward option, but supplements do not necessarily deliver on the promise of better health and if miss-managed they are actually dangerous.

***"The source of the nutrient is important"***

We need to appreciate that the source of the nutrient is important. Nutrients need to come from food and not supplements, which means we must understand how to nourish ourselves with the right foods because supplements are not the quick fix answer.

## NOT THE QUICK FIX ANSWER

Healthy foods such as fresh fruits, vegetables and fish, contain nutrients and other health promoting compounds which work together to keep us healthy.

***"No single nutrient can be effective when isolated and extracted from food!"***



It's this synergistic effect of food nutrients and their compounds working in combination that benefit our bodies and we cannot get this from a supplement.

## Turmeric Supplements!

There are turmeric teas, coffees and turmeric pills galore but they will render ineffective because the bioactive compound within turmeric, **curcumin**, cannot work in isolation.



The compound curcumin to become effective requires two other compounds;

1. **Black pepper**
2. **Fats (olive oil, or coconut oil, or avocado etc)**

These two compounds are essential to facilitate the absorption of curcumin into the body's cells.



This is the rule of mother nature where no single nutrient can be effective when isolated and extracted from food!

Here's another thought;

*Where do all these supplements originate from?*

It's a curious fact that when we think of drugs, we mostly think "artificial" but we think of vitamin supplements as nearly always "natural."



But both drugs and vitamin supplements can be artificial or natural. However, 'natural' isn't as natural as it should be.



Supplements labeled "**natural**" include many

- **Vegetable sources**
- **Animal sources**
- **Mineral sources**

(e.g. vitamin C, D & E, fish liver oils, Magnesium and Iron)

They still have to undergo **processing** and **refining** before turning into a supplement.

# “NATURAL”

# VITAMIN C

A vitamin marked as “*natural*” needs only to have:

- 10% natural plant-derived ingredients

This leaves:

- 90% as synthetic!!
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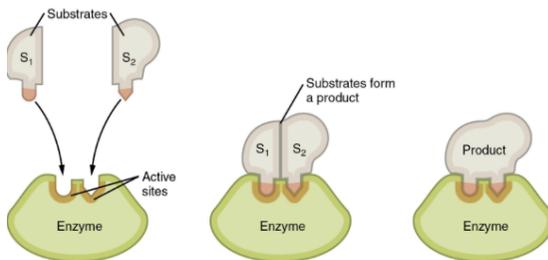
## What Does SYNTHETIC Mean?

This means plant nutrients are synthetically manufactured in a laboratory.

- Synthetic plant nutrients will have a molecular structure identical to those nutrients occurring in nature.

However, the problem is:

- The body’s enzymes do not recognize the “shape” of the synthetic nutrient despite the same chemical constituents
- Enzymes are programmed to work only on vitamins with the right “shape” e.g. vitamins naturally contained in fruit and vegetables.



## Vitamin C

Most vitamin C is synthetically manufactured in China with the most popular form being ascorbic acid. Naturally occurring vitamin C is the same molecule as synthetic ascorbic acid. However, in food, ascorbic acid is found within the vitamin C complex among other compounds but in supplements ascorbic acid is made from either corn starch, corn sugar, or rice starch!



**“A vitamin marked as “*natural*” needs only to have 10% natural plant-derived ingredients leaving 90% as synthetic”**

# TAKE HOME MESSAGE

## Last Word

- Achieving optimal health requires us to focus on what we eat and not on reaching for supplements
- We should look to getting all our nutrients from whole foods because supplements will not promote health
- Synthetic supplements are isolated man-made chemical compounds which our body does not:
  - recognize
  - readily absorb
  - and can cause adverse effects.
- Supplements could just as easily be put into the same category as other synthetic pharmaceutical drugs

## Special Note:

In **EXTREME** cases where diet is an issue some supplements can have a benefit, for instance:

- Folic acid for pregnant women
- Iron for those who are anemic
- B-vitamins for those dealing with alcoholism
- Vitamin D for those who have undergone bariatric surgery
- Vitamin C for someone with scurvy

## References

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# THE GREEN WARD

## HEALTH & WELLBEING

### **About The Green Ward:**

The Green Ward is a NUTRITIONAL THERAPY practice that views the body as a whole. Rather than diagnosis we look at prevention of disease by correcting any imbalances through food, exercise and lifestyle changes. We base our practice on the scientific evidence that healthy food provides the nutrients needed to heal the body and bring us back to optimum health and wellbeing. We couple this belief with the understanding that the benefits of regular physical activity can also help reduce the risk for several diseases, health conditions and improve overall quality of life.



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