

## Should You Take Nutritional Supplements?

By Debbie Neumayer

Should you take nutritional supplements? Probably not—if you grow your own fruit, vegetables, and grains in composted and organic soil and your diet consists primarily of these high-nutrition foods. Probably “yes” if you don’t. It’s that simple.

Your 75 trillion cells need daily nourishment, but it’s difficult to fulfill their requirements with today’s conventionally raised, nutritionally bankrupt foods.

### *The problem with today’s food*

A plant is only as healthy as the soil in which it is grown. If vital nutrients aren’t in the soil, then the fruit or vegetable growing in that soil can’t magically create them. There are certain microbes necessary to convert inorganic rock matter into organic minerals for uptake by the plant. The problem is, today’s modern chemical fertilizers have all but destroyed most vital soil-based organisms. Without proper nutrition in the soil, plants cannot grow in a robust and healthy manner. Insects are attracted to these weakened crops, which prompts the farmer to use more pesticides, and a vicious cycle is perpetuated.

Crop rotation seems to be a forgotten practice in large-scale commercial agriculture. Thus, over-farming has depleted the soil of its native array of nutrients, only augmenting with fertilizers containing the bare minimum nutrients: phosphorous, potassium, and nitrogen (without which the plants can’t grow at all). Herbicides and crop desiccants (such as glyphosate) are used to benefit widespread industrial farming practices, but greatly harm health of the end user, the consumer.

If those toxins aren’t bad enough, your fruits and vegetables may have been grown with a cheap fertilizer known as sewage sludge. According to the October 4, 2010 online issue of *Food Safety News*, sewage sludge fertilizer “regularly tests positive for a host of heavy metals, flame retardants, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, pharmaceuticals, phthalates, dioxins, and a host of other chemicals and organisms.”

### *Premature harvesting*

To prolong shelf and storage life, conventionally raised crops are most often harvested before they have ripened and are then stored in a warehouse for who knows how long. So that large and colorful apple you see in the store is deceptive. When you get it home and bite into it, you’ll realize why it tastes similar to a raw potato.

### *Genetically modified organisms*

Greedy biotech corporations strip food of its natural DNA, causing a form of food ID theft. This process involves inserting a plant with genetic material from foreign sources (like animals) that nature could never achieve naturally. The practice is executed to the extent that the original

inherent footprint in the food no longer exists. The end result is a genetically modified organism (GMO) product. GMO food masquerades as the real thing, when it's really a counterfeit version.

Currently, GMO foods and their byproducts include those made with corn, soy, beet sugar, canola oil, soybean oil, cottonseed oil, papaya, some potatoes, genetically engineered growth hormones in milk from conventionally raised cows, and the list is always growing. The caveat is, you can also consume GMOs indirectly by eating meat from animals fed GMO grains.

Where are you going to obtain vital nutrition for your body if you can't trust most of the food in your local grocery store? The answer is: you have to grow your own or take nutritional supplements and high quality food sources from an ethical company.

### *Quality control standards: how to tell the good from the bad*

Many people wonder how you can tell a good quality supplement from a bad quality one. Having spent my corporate career as a copywriter for supplement companies, I share thoughts from my experience, research, and perspective.

When I worked as a corporate copywriter for a world-renowned natural products company, I was very impressed with their quality control standards. I learned that they quarantine all raw material as soon as it arrives at their manufacturing facility. They then test each plant for identity to make sure it is exactly the plant and species that the supplier says it is. (You'd be surprised at how many suppliers try to pass off other herbs as the authentic one!). It's also examined for purity and potency. If it doesn't pass inspection, the shipment is rejected. After an herb is accepted, a sample is kept in a special room. They then catalog each step of the herbal ingredient until the time it leaves the company, either as a bottled single herb or part of a formula. This process ensures that the herb can be tracked all the way back to the testing data and raw plant sample, if there is ever a need. This leading company sells their products through retail venues (online and in health food stores).

### *Do your homework*

If you have questions about the supplements and health food products you currently use, I would definitely check out their quality control process. Many supplement ingredients come from all over the world, including China, a country known to adulterate many of their exports with toxins. Other companies might "private label" their products, which means they sell formulas under their brand name but the products are actually manufactured by another company. If a supplement is very cheap, it might be substandard. The old adage is most often true that "you get what you pay for."

Your health is more precious than gold and I always tell people that you either pay for it on the front end or the back end (and the back end is much more expensive, in the form of medical bills). So invest in your health today by giving your body the optimal nutrition it needs for both quality and quantity of life!