

Vitamin and Mineral Recommendations after Bariatric Surgery

Lifelong vitamin and mineral supplementation and blood test monitoring is required after all bariatric surgeries. This sheet talks about supplements needed and how to take them.

Vitamins and minerals are in a wide range of foods. They are important for your body to be healthy. After bariatric surgery your body needs extra vitamins and minerals because you are only able to eat small amounts of food. This means your body may absorb less vitamins and minerals.

For this reason, it is recommended that **you take vitamin and mineral supplements every day** as well as eating a healthy diet. This includes daily multivitamins *and* extra vitamin and mineral supplements, as recommended by your bariatric surgery healthcare team. Extra supplements could include calcium, vitamin D, iron, vitamin B12.

Blood tests to check your vitamin and mineral levels are done every 3-6 months after surgery for the first year, then once a year after that.

- Make sure you get your blood test done 2-3 weeks before your clinic appointment.
- If you do not have a blood test form before your appointment, please contact your bariatric surgery healthcare team or GP to get one.

If you have any questions about your vitamin and mineral supplements, or if you have any difficulties taking them, please talk to your bariatric surgery healthcare team or GP.

The following are recommended brands and formulations that provide good amounts of vitamins and minerals. Individual needs may vary; therefore, it is important you follow advice from your bariatric surgery healthcare team.

Daily multivitamin supplementation options

Product	Tablets/day	Benefits	Extra information
Fit For Me™ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opti (Sleeve) • Forte (Bypass) (chewable or capsule)	1/day <i>1 iron and copper tablet/day is also needed with the chewable option</i>	Chewable option 1 tablet/day in capsule form	Contains no calcium. You may need more calcium from your diet and/or supplementation Buy online Does not contain vitamin K
BN (chewable or capsule)	2/day	Chewable option	No calcium in capsule form. You may need more calcium from your diet and/or supplementation Buy online No vitamin K in chewable form*
Centrum for Women/Men (tablet)	2/day	Easy to buy over the counter from chemist Affordable Can be crushed or cut	Contains calcium. You may need more calcium from your diet and/or supplementation Contains vitamin K

**If you are changing from chewable to capsule and are on blood thinners (warfarin), you may need extra INR monitoring.*

Calcium & vitamin D supplementation options – take if recommended

Product	Average tablets/day	Benefits	Extra information
Caltrate Bone*	1-2 tablets/day	Easy to buy	Contains vitamin D Avoid if at high risk of developing kidney stones
Caltrate 600mg*	1-2 tablets/day	Easy to buy	Avoid if at high risk of developing kidney stones
Caltrate chews*	1-2 chewable/day	Chewable Easy to buy	Contains vitamin D Avoid if at high risk of developing kidney stones
Citracal petites	1-2 tablets/day	Small and easy to swallow Buy online	Contains vitamin D Buy online Good choice if at risk of developing kidney stones
Fit For Me calcium soft chew	1-2 chews/ day	Chewable	Contains vitamin D Buy online Good choice if at risk of developing kidney stones
Swisse ultiboost calcium + vitamin D effervescent*	1-2 tablets dissolved in water/day	Dissolvable Easy to buy	Contains vitamin D Avoid if at high risk of developing kidney stones

* Contains calcium carbonate. Have with meals to help absorption.

Your bariatric surgery vitamin and mineral supplement recommendations are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

For further information contact your Dietitian/Nutritionist: _____

Many bariatric surgery services have pharmacists who you can contact with any questions or concerns regarding your medications and supplements. You can also contact your local pharmacist for medication queries.

Common Questions about Multivitamins and Supplements

How many multivitamins should I take a day?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you buy a multivitamin from the chemist, you should take two per day • If you buy a bariatric surgery specific multivitamin take as the product label recommends
When should I take my multivitamins?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are taking two multivitamins a day, take at different times of the day e.g. after breakfast and dinner
Can I take a gummie multivitamin?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. Gummie multivitamins do not contain enough vitamins and minerals
What if I am taking IRON too?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iron is best taken on an empty stomach for absorption • Take 1 -2 hours before food
What if I am taking CALCIUM too?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take calcium supplements at a different time to an iron supplement • Some calcium supplements need to be taken with food, check the label
I feel unwell after my multivitamins or supplements, what can I do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take your tablets later in the day • If you are taking 2 multivitamins per day, take these at different times • Iron supplements can cause nausea, stomach cramps or diarrhoea. Talk to your bariatric surgery healthcare team about other options or try taking iron with food
I am having trouble swallowing tablets, what should I do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try chewable multivitamins such as Fit For Me™/BN multivitamins™ • Some chemist bought multivitamins can be crushed to make it easier to swallow. For example, Centrum Men/Women™ • Try multivitamin powders. For example, Barilife™ multivitamin powder
How can I remember to take my tablets?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set a reminder on your phone • Leave your multivitamins and supplements in a visible area • Use a pill box or ask your pharmacist about other aids to manage doses
Should I take hair, skin and nails to help with hair loss?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not take specific hair, skin and nail supplements. These can be high in zinc which can cause issues with other nutrients. Talk to your bariatric surgery healthcare team about options
Is my bariatric multivitamin okay for pregnancy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recommended to wait 12 months after surgery before planning a pregnancy. Contact your bariatric surgery healthcare team, as your supplement plan may need to change
What is an example supplement plan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the morning: take one multivitamin and if advised, calcium • In the evening: take one multivitamin and if advised, iron