

Benefits of prenatal vitamins

Prenatal vitamins are supplements that contain daily vitamins and minerals you need before and during your pregnancy.

Specific vitamins and minerals found in prenatal vitamins include folic acid, iron, calcium, and vitamin D. Folic acid helps prevent neural tube defects in the developing fetus, while iron supports the mother's increased blood volume. Calcium and vitamin D are crucial for the development of the baby's bones and teeth. Folic acid is the most important vitamin to take when planning a pregnancy.

1. Healthy overall pregnancy support

Pregnancy is demanding on the body. In addition to supporting new life, the body needs support for everyday jobs, like healthy digestion, bone support, heart health, and handling occasional stress.

This is where prenatal vitamins come in. Prenatal vitamins are specifically formulated to provide essential nutrients that support the health of both the mother and the developing baby. They help bridge any nutritional gaps and ensure that the body has an adequate supply of key vitamins and minerals needed for a healthy pregnancy.

2. Thyroid support from Iodine*

Iodine plays an important role in helping to support your thyroid during pregnancy. The need for iodine increases by almost [50% during pregnancy](#). Your thyroid uses small amounts of iodine to help with hormone production. These hormones control your metabolism and support your cardiovascular system.

Using iodized table salt is a common way to get iodine in the diet. But relying on salt alone [may cause you to fall short](#). A 2008 study found that out of 88 samples of iodized table salt, only half contained amounts of iodine sufficient for optimal health. Plus, some salts don't have iodine added. Also, your prenatal care provider may have advised you to steer clear of too much salt to help support healthy blood pressure levels. So, you may choose to take a supplement to get the iodine your body needs.

3. Energy support from B Vitamins

The eight B Vitamins play important roles in your body's ability to convert nutrition into energy, making them a top booster of energy in the body. B6, B9 and [B12 all support the baby's development](#), as well.

B3, also known as Niacin, [has the ability to support healthy digestion and reduce nausea](#). B5 can help reduce leg cramps. B7 (Biotin) levels drop during pregnancy, which can wreak havoc on your hair, skin, and nails. Supplementing your Biotin can help support that pregnancy glow.

4. Blood oxygen transport from Iron

During pregnancy, your body uses iron to make more blood for both you and your baby. Iron helps you to produce more hemoglobin, a protein in the red blood cells. This in turn helps move oxygen from your lungs to the rest of the body, including to your baby.

The need for iron doubles during pregnancy. It's estimated that up to 50% of women don't get enough Iron during their pregnancy, and Iron deficiency can cause some issues. Prenatal vitamins with Iron can be a helpful daily source of Iron. You can also ask your healthcare professional about the right amount of prenatal Iron for you.

5. Immune support from Vitamins A, C and Zinc

Immune support is super important when you're pregnant. That's because you can barely take anything for coughs and colds during pregnancy. Most over-the-counter flu aids and cold medicines are off limits, and battling a head cold while pregnant is miserable. Vitamins A, C and Zinc are all essential to supporting your immune health and they can be taken during pregnancy.

[Vitamin A](#) is essential for maintaining a healthy mucosal system. It supports the production of white blood cells, too. A deficiency in Vitamin A may mean [more susceptibility to infections](#) or longer recovery times.

Many women are told to just stay on their prenatal vitamins after birth. But did you know that the recommended nutrition levels for women change postpartum, especially if you're breastfeeding?

During the postpartum period, women need increased levels of certain nutrients to support their recovery and breastfeeding. For example, they may require higher intake of iron, calcium, and omega-3 fatty acids to replenish nutrient stores and promote optimal milk production.

It is important for healthcare providers to educate women about these changes and ensure they are receiving the necessary nutrients for their postpartum and breastfeeding needs.