Information that can help us
Balance Our Supplements
from

"What We Eat In America"

www.ars.usda.gov/SP2UserFiles/Place/12355000/pdf/usualintakestables2001-02.pdf

A. Moshfegh, J. D. Goldman and L. E. Cleveland. What We Eat in America, NHANES 2001-2002: Usual Nutrient Intakes from Food Compared to Dietary Reference Intakes. 2005.

In 2001-2002, the Agricultural Research Service of USDA did us a great service by finding out what Americans eat and how the nutrients they consume with food compare with the nutritional requirements for healthy people.

Although these numbers cannot replace a personal assessment, and the Study did not include all essential nutrients (go to Box A)*, the report points us to areas many of us on a modern, processed-food diet could do well to supplement.

In general, they found that Americans' food selections:

I. do NOT give most (greater than 50%) enough [go to Box B]

Magnesium (Go to Box E)

Vitamin E

Fiber (most probably)

Vitamin C (smokers only)

Vitamin A (men age 14+; women age 14 - 30).

II. do NOT give many (25 to 49%) enough

Vitamin C – nonsmokers

Vitamin A – (women over age 30).

III. may not be giving us enough

Calcium [go to Box C part 1]

IV. Most definitely give us TOO MUCH Sodium and probably not enough potassium [Box C, parts 1 & 2 side-by-side with Box D]

***"What We Eat In America"**
did NOT assess

- biotin,
- pantothenic acid,
- boron,
- chromium,
- cobalt,
- manganese,
- molybdenum,
- nickel,
- vanadium

(Box A)

Specific Nutrient Information for age/gender groups

From the foods they eat:

In adult women, non-pregnant, non-lactating,

Over 97% don't get enough vitamin E
64 – 82% don't get enough magnesium [Box E]
Most might be low in their potassium while
56 – 88% get too much sodium [all Box C side-by-side Box D]
38 – 58% don't get enough vitamin A
29 – 41% don't get enough vitamin C (81 – 84% if smokers)
21 – 49% don't get enough B6
14 – 21% don't get enough folate
11 – 36% don't get enough zinc
10 – 17% don't get enough iron
8 – 10% don't get enough thiamin
5 – 13% don't get enough niacin
4 – 11% don't get enough protein
may not be getting enough calcium from their foods – statistics cannot tell us. [Box C part 1]

"What We Eat In America"
Used EAR* (Estimated Average Requirements) for these nutrients:

Vitamin A	Selenium
Vitamin E	Carbohydrate
Thiamin	protein
Riboflavin	Phosphorus,
Niacin	Magnesium
Vitamin B6	Iron
Folate	Zinc
Vitamin B12	Copper
Vitamin C	

*EAR allows statistical calculation of the % of individuals with less than adequate intake of that nutrient. (Box B)

Women aged 51+ years would do well to supplement vitamin B12.

In Teen-aged girls, age 9 – 18:

Over 97% get too much sodium and may not get enough potassium [Box C side-by-side Box D]
95 – 97+% don't get enough Magnesium [Box E]
44 – 91% don't get enough Vitamin E
42 – 49% don't get enough Phosphorus
34 – 54% don't get enough Vitamin A
16% don't get enough Iron
16% don't get enough Copper
16% don't get enough vitamin B6
14% don't get enough Protein
10 - 26% don't get enough Zinc
May not get enough Calcium [Box C part 1]

A good product for teen aged girls would be Diet Coke Plus, which has vitamins B6 and B12, Zinc, Magnesium, and Phosphorus.

In Boys aged 9 – 18:

14 – 78% don't get enough magnesium [Box E]
13 – 55% don't get enough vitamin A
9% don't get enough phosphorus
8 – 26% don't get enough vitamin C
4% don't get enough folate or zinc
97+% get too much sodium while
Many probably don't get enough potassium [Box C side-by-side D]
May not get enough calcium [Box C part 1]

"What We Eat In America"
Used *AI (Adequate Intakes) for these nutrients:

Vitamin K	Calcium
Dietary Fiber	Potassium
Linoleic Acid	Sodium
Linolenic Acid	

*AI does not statistically allow assumptions about prevalence of inadequacy
(Box C part 1 ends here)

While over 97% get their AI for sodium, less than 3% get their AI for potassium from foods.
(Box C part 2)

In Adult men, aged 19 – 50:

89 – 90% don't get enough vitamin E
55 – 61% don't get enough magnesium
55 – 59% don't get enough vitamin A
37 – 40% don't get enough vitamin C (smokers, 67%)
6% don't get enough folate
4 - 6% don't get enough zinc

97+% get too much sodium while
Many probably don't get enough potassium [Box c/d]

In older men, aged 51 +

90 – 94% don't get enough vitamin E
70 – 81% don't get enough magnesium[Box E]
51 – 55% don't get enough vitamin A
39 – 42% don't get enough vitamin C (smokers, 75%)
20 – 30% don't get enough zinc
16 – 23% don't get enough vitamin B6
7 – 11% don't get enough folate
6 – 7 % don't get enough thiamin
84 – 91% get too much sodium while
Most probably don't get enough potassium [Box c/d]
May not get enough calcium [Box C part 1]
Would do well to consider supplementing their vitamin B12

How much is too much?

"What We Eat In America"

Used the UL ("Upper Tolerable Intake Level") for the following nutrients:

Nutrient	% above UL from foods
Vitamin A	less than 3% (except ages 1 – 3)
Folate	less than 3% (except ages 1 – 8)
Vitamin B6	less than 3%
Vitamin C	less than 3%
Calcium	less than 3%
Phosphorus	less than 3%
Iron	less than 3%
Zinc	less than 3% (except ages 1 - 8)
Copper	less than 3% (except ages 1 - 3)
Selenium	less than 3% (except ages 1 - 3)
Sodium (Box D)	**most 56 – 97+%**

What about infants and toddlers?

This report found that children aged 1 – 4 years may be
low in vitamin E, potassium and fiber,
they appear to be adequate in magnesium and the other minerals,
are adequate in all the B vitamins and vitamin C.

Some children aged 1 – 3 years (up to 15%)
are getting too much copper, selenium, vitamin A and folate from their foods.
Up to 69% of 1 – 3 year olds are getting too much zinc, and
80 – 93% are getting too much sodium from their foods.

Almost all get too much sodium [go to Box D].

And our low potassium [go to Box C]and magnesium [go to Box E] intakes make these high intakes of sodium especially unhealthy. Sodium needs potassium to be in balance, and potassium needs enough magnesium for it to properly function at the cellular level. Too much sodium coupled with too little potassium and too little magnesium is an unhealthy nutritional mix. With adequate magnesium and potassium, the body can handle sodium and "salting to taste" can be just fine.

But be careful!!! So many people try to limit sodium in their diets, some successfully so -- only to find out that a low blood sodium can mean illness and even death. It would be much better for those wanting to limit their sodium to rather be sure their magnesium and potassium are adequate. That way, the body can handle the amounts of sodium that our culture so loves at this time.

BOX E:

% of people in each age/gender group that are not getting enough magnesium from foods:

	% of group getting less Mg than required for health	% of group getting less Mg than required for health
Age group	**Males**	**Females**
9 – 13 yrs	**14%**	**44%**
14 – 18 yrs	**78%**	**91%**
19 – 30 yrs	**55%**	**64%**
31 – 50 yrs	**61%**	**65%**
51 – 70 yrs	**70%**	**64%**
71+ yrs	**81%**	**82%**
All 19+ yrs	**64%**	**67%**

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