SUPPLEMENTS FOR WOMEN OF ANY AGE

Whether you want to ease PMS, stop hot flashes, or save your heart, key remedies can make a huge difference

BY VERA TWEED

Despite emancipation, and less discrimination in the workplace, women are facing greater health challenges as the world becomes more toxic. Supplements can go a long way toward protecting against environmental invaders and the ravages of time, especially when combined with a wholesome diet and regular physical activity. The trick is choosing the most effective supplements.

AN EASY WAY TO KEEP WEIGHT DOWN

The multivitamin lays an important foundation. By filling gaps in today’s nutrient-depleted food, it provides nutritional insurance and can assist with weight loss, according to a study of obese women published in the *International Journal of Obesity*. Researchers noted: “Obese individuals are more likely to have either lower blood concentrations or lower bioavailability of minerals and/or vitamins.”

The study compared the effects of a multivitamin and mineral supplement, calcium, or a placebo on weight and health markers among 87 women in China between the ages of 18 and 55. There was no diet or exercise program. Women who took the multi lost nearly 8 pounds in 26 weeks, whereas those who took a low-dose calcium supplement (162 milligrams daily) lost slightly less than 2 pounds, and those taking a placebo lost less than 0.5 pound.

In the trial, the multi helped women shed fat, rather than muscle, and significantly increased the number of calories burned in the normal course of life—a phenomenon sometimes described as “revving up metabolism.” And multis improved cholesterol levels.

Different formulations are designed for women at various stages of life, but as a rule, multivitamins don’t contain a full day’s calcium requirements: 1,000 milligrams; 1,200 milligrams after age 50. This total includes calcium from food and supplements, so your personal needs depend on your diet. Vitamin D,
fish oil, and CoQ10 are other basic nutrients that need to be taken separately, and each provides a range of benefits (see top 10 list).

FIND BALANCE
One of our favorite Web sites for women 40 and older is womeninbalance.org. Women in Balance is a nonprofit group comprised of women, doctors, naturopaths, and other health care professionals—all of whom are dedicated and passionate about hormone imbalance and the role it plays in women’s health. “We are the only nonprofit that is focused on addressing and treating these issues for women, without bias or affiliation,” they state on their site. There, you’ll find free information about everything from loss of libido to vaginal dryness to hormone testing.

TODAY’S BIGGEST CHALLENGE
Toxins disrupt hormones, speed up the aging process, and promote disease. We can limit our exposure (by eating organic food, using toxin-free skin care and household products, and avoiding plastic food containers), but we can’t completely escape from environmental pollutants. However, it’s possible to reduce the impact of toxins on our bodies.

Although their effects are not fully known, many toxins mimic estrogen, disrupting the natural balance among hormones. Manifestations may include accentuated PMS symptoms, early and more severe symptoms of approaching menopause (such as hot flashes and mood swings), a more difficult transition through menopause, and increased risk for hormone-related cancers. Specific nutrients or herbs can help to counteract this damaging process.

THE TOP 10 EASY-TO-FIND AND EFFECTIVE REMEDIES FOR WOMEN
These supplements provide a broad scope of benefits, from relieving hormonal discomforts to protecting against female cancers and heart disease—the top killer of women.

VITAMIN D
Low levels of vitamin D increase risk for a host of conditions, including high blood pressure, PMS, heart disease, stroke, cancers, depression, arthritis, obesity, diabetes, autoimmune conditions, inflammatory bowel disease, colds and flu, allergies, asthma, osteoporosis, and overall risk of premature death. Integrative physicians frequently recommend taking 2,000 international units daily, a significantly larger quantity than can be found in multis. Vitamin D is available in capsules and liquid supplements.

FISH OIL
Several studies have found that fish oil can reduce menstrual pain. In a study of 42 teens, published in the American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology, 6 grams of fish oil daily was the effective amount. Fish oil may also prevent breast cancer. To combat inflammation and improve virtually all aspects of health, including the heart, skin, brain, joints, and overall mood, 3 grams of total omega-3 fat content daily is the usual recommended amount.

COQ10
Compared to men, women often have less dramatic symptoms of heart disease and are less likely to get rapidly and correctly diagnosed. CoQ10 is a vital nutrient for the heart because it feeds mitochondria, the energy-generating component of cells, and makes the heart stronger at any age. The supplement lowers blood pressure and cholesterol, inhibits deadly clots, and improves recovery from heart surgery to a remarkable degree. And it can help with weight loss. CoQ10 is available as an individual supplement, and from 50 to 300 milligrams per day is taken in divided doses with meals.

DIM (DIINDOLYL METHANE)
Broccoli and other cruciferous vegetables contain indole-3-carbinol (13C), a substance that is converted into DIM in our bodies. DIM affects the breakdown of a form of estrogen called estrone, and according to animal research, appears to reduce its harmful effects, helping to prevent breast, cervical, and other cancers. When taken at a dose of 2 milligrams per kilogram of body weight per day, DIM may also offer some protection against cervical dysplasia, a precancerous abnormal growth of cells on the cervix. Individual supplements of 13C and DIM are available, and some formulas contain both.
80% of Women Who Have Had More Than Two Urinary Tract Problems Will Have Another!

Fight Back!
Ester-C® Urinary Tract Formula
A powerful complex to help cleanse your urinary tract while giving you the benefits of 24-hour immune support.*

• 2000 mg of Whole Food Cranberry•
• High Anti-Adhesive Properties*
• Once Daily • 100% Vegetarian

Plus the 24 Hour Immune Support of patented non-acidic Ester-C®
The Better Vitamin C.*

AMERICAN HEALTH
1-866-646-8576 • www.AmericanHealthUS.com

*These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.


WOMEN'S HEALTH

CALCIUM D-GLUCARATE
Not the same substance as the mineral calcium, calcium D-glucarate reduces the impact of toxins (particularly harmful forms of estrogen in environmental pollutants) and aids in their elimination. Its mechanism includes inhibiting an enzyme that promotes hormone-dependent cancers, and it appears to regulate estrogen metabolism and lower cholesterol. Calcium D-glucarate is found in oranges, apples, grapefruit, and cruciferous vegetables. Therapeutic amounts are available in individual supplements and in cleansing or detoxification formulas.

EVENING PRIMROSE OIL
A source of the healthful omega-6 fatty acid GLA (gamma linolenic acid), evening primrose oil is often taken to reduce PMS symptoms such as bloating, irritability, depressed mood, and breast tenderness. It may also help relieve hot flashes and night sweats in the years leading up to menopause. Evening primrose oil helps control blood pressure and, because it reduces inflammation, may be beneficial for arthritis, allergies, and eczema. It is available as an individual supplement and in formulas to provide 240 milligrams of GLA per day.

POMEGRANATE
Studies have found that antioxidant-rich pomegranate is good for the heart and counteracts harmful effects of estrogen. In a cell study published in Cancer Prevention Research, pomegranate suppressed an enzyme that promotes breast cancer, helping to prevent the disease, and stopped growth of tumors. Researchers identified compounds in the fruit that specifically target estrogen-dependent cancers.

CHASTEBERRY
Also called vitex, chasteberry is a medical treatment in Europe for breast tenderness associated with PMS and noncancerous cysts, or fibrocystic breast disease. It is also used to relieve other symptoms of PMS, irregular periods, and menopausal discomfort, and to enhance fertility. In addition to being an individual supplement, chasteberry, usually 100 to 200 milligrams, is found in formulas with other herbs, such as black cohosh, to relieve hot flashes, and other menopausal symptoms.

PROGESTERONE
A low level of progesterone is a very common cause of uncomfortable premenopausal symptoms. Many women get relief safely with a form of the hormone that is chemically identical to the progesterone our bodies produce (not the same as "progestin," which increases risks for heart disease and strokes). Progesterone is available in very low dosages at health food stores or by prescription through integrative physicians, who usually do tests to determine customized dosages. "If you get too much or too little," says Pam Tarlow, an integrative pharmacist in Los Angeles, "You
Power meets precision with impeccable results. Some call it synergy — you’ll call it your best-kept kitchen secret. Laser-cut blades, a precision-crafted container and one amazing motor let you cook, juice, grind, blend, whip, chop, freeze, crush and more. You can explore. Discover new tastes and textures. With the Vitamix® 5200, your creativity will know no limits.

DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE GREEN SMOOTHIE RECIPE BOOK TODAY!
JUST VISIT WWW.VITAMIX.COM/BETTERNUTRITION/5
CALL FOR A NO-RISK, IN-HOME TRIAL AND GET UP TO 5 FREE GIFTS! USE PROMO CODE 04-0030-0085
1-800-VITAMIX (848-2649)