



October 17, 2009 – Irvine, CA

## Vitamin Strategy

Once in a while, you come across something that's so well done, so concise, that you have to share it. Such is the case with a video done by none other than the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Many people on the Internet believe the FDA is against dietary supplements and want them banned. If they do, the video "Fortify Your Knowledge of Vitamins" (1) by Dr. Barbara Schneeman, the Director of FDA's Office of Nutritional Products, is a funny way to pursue that ban. In this message, I'll summarize what's in the video along with my comments.

### Who Should Take Vitamin Supplements?

The video identifies two specific groups and one group that could apply to almost anyone. The video recommends that those who follow a vegetarian or vegan diet or who are pregnant or breastfeeding may need to supplement; vegans need vitamin B12 and pregnant women need folic acid and a lot more.

But the first group on the list was the most important in my opinion, even though it was the most nebulous: people with certain health problems. Those problems were not identified, and I can understand why—the list would be extensive, and that wasn't the purpose of the video. The list of nutrients would also extend beyond vitamins and minerals to include other substances such as probiotics, omega-3 fatty acids, and other supplements such as digestive enzymes.

I've talked extensively about sub-clinical deficiencies, with vitamin D being the most recent example. The question is: how can you identify those potential deficiencies? I'll talk more about that later.

### Food First

Dr. Schneeman makes a very important statement: "Supplements can be useful when they fulfill a specific identified nutrient need that can't be met by food or is not being met through normal food intake." What she's really saying is that we should all start by eating a good diet with plenty of vegetables and fruits. I agree. She goes on to say, "It's really important to remember that supplements can't displace a healthful diet—that's the important nutritional strategy." In other words, supplements complement a good diet, they don't replace it. Again, right on.

However, I'd go a step further. We have a great food-distribution system in the U.S. and Canada, but the fresh foods we eat may have been harvested months ago and stored in cool warehouses. While the decline of vitamins can be slowed, they won't have the same amounts of vitamins and phytonutrients as when first picked. We still need the minerals, the fiber, and the water in the produce, but we need to complement the food with quality supplements.

### The Wary Consumer

The video ends with a few excellent statements about being a wary consumer, and I agree with every one of them. In fact, if you've been reading my Message a long time, you'll think it's me who wrote these things. I can't take the credit, but I'll give them the respect for writing the following:

- *Think twice about chasing the latest headlines, and be wary of a quick fix.*

- *Take only the recommended amounts: Some products can be harmful when consumed in high amounts, or for a long time, or with certain other substances.*
- *Learn to spot false claims: if something is too good to be true, it probably is.*

Again, excellent recommendations. The question is: how do you know what's a false claim or how much may be too much of a nutrient? That's why you subscribe to the Message. I'm here to guide you. Together with your physician, we'll help you traverse this slope to make sure you're taking what you need to take.

## The Bottom Line

Listen to the video because it's very sound advice—just click on the link below. But I want to go back to the earlier question: how do you determine which vitamins and minerals you may be deficient in? I've contracted with Damian Walters and Associates to bring back a tool that can help you do just that. Some of you may remember The Vitamin and Mineral Hand-Scored Assessment. It's easy to use, only 31 questions, in an easy-to-use spreadsheet format. Based on the best of science, it can help you identify any nutritional deficiencies you may have. The Vitamin and Mineral Hand-Scored Assessment sells in packages of 10 and 25, and you can order them now. But as an introductory offer—just so you try it—I'm offering two HSAs for only \$2.89; that includes the shipping and handling. I'm willing to offer the HSA at this low price just so you can try it for you and a loved one. I'm going to have this offer available from my Store page for only one week. If you read this message after October 31, 2009, sorry—the deal is gone.

The FDA recommends that you may need to supplement your diet with vitamins and minerals, and the Hand-Scored Assessment can help you, your family, and your customers know what to take. That leaves you with only one question:

What are you prepared to do today?

## Dr. Chet

Reference: [www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm182737.htm](http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm182737.htm)



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