

# Gain Access to Your Nutrients

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As a young mother I remember picking up a box of a new multigrain cold cereal and read the label. It seemed to have every vitamin and mineral available and at 100% per serving. There was a, buy 12 get a discount, so I walked away with 12 boxes of this miracle cereal. I remember not seeing any great difference in my life or that of my family. Why didn't it work? Here are a few things I have learned over time.

In order for our bodies to receive items that it needs, we need a synergistic approach. Synergy comes from two Greek words, *sun* which means work, and *ergon* which means together. Synergy means that two or more parts of other substances come together to produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate parts. The School of Natural Healing teaches the concept of wholesome versus partsome. It says that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Meaning, you get greater value and effect by eating the whole food/herb rather than a standardized and extracted part of it. Here are a few examples of nutrients that our body needs but will only be bioavailable if there is a synergistic blend of minerals and vitamins for the body to be able to absorb it. This is not exhaustive, but illustrates the need we have to eat whole foods and avoid processed foods and supplements.

## **Iron**

If you eat a raisin, you will gain more than just iron. You will also get protein, fiber, calcium, sodium, potassium, vitamin C and other important nutrients. In order for our body to utilize plant-based iron, it needs vitamin C. In a medical article it states, "Vitamin C acts as a reducing agent to facilitate iron absorption from the GI tract and to enable its mobilization from storage. The vitamin C and iron combine to form an iron chelate complex, which increases the solubility of iron in the small intestine, resulting in increased uptake across the mucus membranes of the duodenum. For this reason, vitamin C must be consumed at the same time as the iron in order to be effective." 1 This synergistic combination makes the iron more bioavailable in the body. Bioavailability means that a proportion of a nutrient is digested/absorbed and metabolized. Iron absorption can be inhibited by too much coffee or tea (containing polyphenols and phytates) manganese, or calcium. 2 Some great sources of iron can be apricots, figs, raisins, and beets.

## **Calcium**

Calcium is known for building strong bones, but is also important for nerve response and many more functions. In order to be able to utilize calcium and make strong bones and healthy nerve responses, we need nutrients such as vitamin D, silica, boron, and magnesium.

Calcium absorption can be inhibited by too much oxalic or phytic acids, sulfates, or phosphorous. 3, 4 Some great forms of calcium are leafy green vegetables, nuts, and black strap molasses. Eat these yummy foods while you sit outside and absorb the sun's vitamin D.

## **Folate**

Also known as Vitamin B9, works with vitamin b12 and vitamin C to help the body break down, use and create new proteins. Often expectant mothers are encouraged to get supplements with this nutrient. In order to utilize folate proficiently, we need b 12 and vitamin c to work with it. Crohn's disease or celiac disease where the villi are compromised are ways the body is inhibited from absorbing B9. Eating sprouted legumes, nutritional yeast, and brussels sprouts are great ways to get these three vitamins into your diet.

If we eat an array of fresh produce, plants in their whole state, we see that Mother Earth has prepackaged the nutrients we need in a way we can best receive them. Eat more fresh produce and gain access to the nutrients you may be lacking in your life.

## References

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