

## Primary Care Associates

Prepared and regularly updated by Bruce Kiessling, M.D.

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To help enhance and prolong mental alertness and physical vigor you should consider:

A daily fitness program of flexibility, stamina and strength exercises. Aerobic exercise improves circulation to the brain as well as to the heart (Brainrules.org). Strength training helps preserve muscle mass which we begin to lose after age 30. Flexibility helps prevent injury to the tendons attaching muscles to bone if done after you have warmed up. "You don't get old and stiff; you get stiff and then you get old!" 45 minutes/day or more, at least 5 days a week, dedicated to a fitness program is ideal, but any amount is salutary to your physical and mental health.

A nutrition program that is balanced, comprehensive, intuitive, tasty, continuously updated with ethical science, and which controls your cravings. Weight Watchers is an excellent program to help you get traction toward proper nutrition. It provides a friendly structure of accountability, information, and support: it can be considered the "how" to eat. "The Mediterranean Diet" by M. Cloutier describes the "what" to eat. "The Zone" by Barry Sears is also an interesting book on nutrition and performance.

Drinking more water. One formula is based on weight: half to 2/3 your weight in pounds equals the number of ounces of water recommended/day (e.g. you weigh 150#, you should drink 100 ounces/day). Water works wonders toward wellness.

Not smoking anything. Do not chew tobacco.

Supplements, vitamins, disingenuous diet programs, nostrums and potions foster a multi-billion dollar industry. 99.5% is hype, misleading, sometimes even harmful. But .5% of the offerings are worthwhile. Prior to starting anything, you should review it with your physician.

At every age there is likely a supplement (e.g. Vitamin D) that you should include. The best and first source for all vitamins is a diet rich in bright fruits and vegetables (see "The Mediterranean Diet" above). As we get older however, our digestive system becomes less efficient and supplements become even more relevant. Look for the "USP" label on products. It helps ensure a level of quality and consistency. Consumers Reports points out that aggressively marketed "brands" (touting "better absorption, better quality", etc.) of vitamins are no better and are significantly more expensive.

1. A multivitamin with trace elements included (e.g. zinc, chromium, selenium... ). Trace elements should not be taken in "megadose" quantities.
2. One B-Complex pill/day is a reasonable supplement covering both folate and B12. (Folate (folic acid) 800 mg/day. Be checked for anemia and B12 deficiency before taking this dosage.) In the pre-menopausal woman it prevents certain birth defects. For everyone it may prevent colon polyps.

3. Vitamin C, up to 2000 mg/day. Anyone with gout should avoid high dose Vitamin C. Also one should be checked for iron storage disease because Vitamin C facilitates the absorption of iron.
4. Vitamin D Consider taking at least 2000 IU/day but check with your doctor. Vitamin D is hugely important and your vitamin D level can be measured accurately, and it should be until you have achieved the recommended level. Since 2005 eight major health issues were linked to vitamin D deficiency and since then over 200 different human cell types have been identified as having Vitamin D Receptors. Current RDA recommendations for Vit. D are grossly inadequate.
5. Vitamin E. Doesn't need supplementation beyond what is in your multivitamin. In any case, do not exceed 400mg/day. Almonds are a good source of the best forms of Vitamin E (6-10/day).
6. Calcium 1500mg/day through diet or supplement taken with food. Calcium citrate is one of many choices; but please ignore "coral calcium".
7. A baby aspirin/day. Clotting disorders, blood thinners, stomach problems, asthma/allergies can all be contraindications, so also discuss this with your physician.
8. Fish Oil (at least 1 gram DHA/EPA/day). Ideally we should include fish in our diet, but because few are able to do that every day, supplemental fish oil is thought to enhance heart, kidney and brain health, and diminish harmful inflammatory processes. OmegaRx by Barry Sears provides a useful review.

10. Coenzyme Q 10 similar mg dose as your weight in lbs( 150lbs=150 mg)  
Read about it at a reliable web site (see below).

Other considerations include glucosamine 1500 mg/day for degenerative arthritis. Specific hormonal replacement (e.g. thyroid, estrogen, progesterone, DHEA, testosterone...) should be individualized based on age, symptoms, risk factors, exams, blood tests, and measurable end-points.

I modify or add to the above based upon ethical, reproducible research and unbiased, evidence-based reviews of applied scientific theories. Nonetheless, the recommendations of good nutrition, regular exercise, adequate water intake and no tobacco products are as immutable as any useful health advice can be.

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