

Mother Nurture

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Super Nutrients for Mothers

I'm not sick or anything, but I sure feel run down. What can I do – that's simple and easy, since I've got an infant, a toddler, and a preschooler (yikes!) – to feel better?

First, there are the basics that everyone knows – and our own mothers kept telling us – like getting regular exercise, making sleep a priority (over housework!), taking at least a little time for yourself every day, eating a balanced diet, limiting sweets, and getting regular check-ups to rule out serious health problems.

On top of this foundation, each mother needs certain key nutrients – especially since every mom is susceptible to getting physically depleted (as we explain in our book, *Mother Nurture: A Mother's Guide to Health in Body, Mind, and Intimate Relationships*).

If you make sure to get these nutrients routinely, you're definitely going to feel better. It may take a few months, because it takes a while to get nutrients back into the body, especially minerals. That's why you have to stick with it, and not expect an overnight miracle. But when you stay the course, nurturing your own body while you nurture your family, you will likely experience a dramatic improvement in your health and well-being!

So here's what you need to do:

1. Eat protein with every meal, especially breakfast – Protein contains the amino acids that are the building blocks of the body; for example, tryptophan is required to make the neurotransmitter, serotonin, and increasing serotonin levels is the aim of Prozac, etc. Protein also helps regulate blood sugar levels, which helps prevent Type II diabetes and makes it easier to shed excess pounds.
2. Routinely take a basic MultiVitamin/MultiMineral supplement containing iron – Use a supplement that recommends four to six pills a day (rather than a one-a-day like Centrum) because getting all the minerals you need into a single pill would require one the size of a golf ball. You can get a good “multi” or any of the other nutrients named in this column at your local health food store or from our website (specially chosen for mothers): www.NurtureMom.com. And in addition to this multi, take the other supplements described just below.

3. B-Complex – The B vitamins assist literally thousands of metabolic functions, including lifting your mood and preventing depression. Take one a day.
4. Vitamin C – This helps detoxify your body, turbocharge your immune system, and many other wonderful things. Take one to two grams a day. Increase to four to ten grams/day at the first sign of a cold (but decrease if you develop diarrhea) and maintain that dose for the duration of the illness before dropping back down.
5. Calcium and Magnesium – These minerals promote healthy bones (helping prevent osteoporosis), healthy sleep, and a healthy mood. They are often available in a combined supplement. Each day, take 1000 to 1500 milligrams of calcium and 400 milligrams of magnesium.
6. Taurine – This amino acid helps soothe frazzled nerves (among other good things), but it is drained out of your body during both pregnancy and breastfeeding. Take 500 milligrams a day.
7. Essential fatty acids (EFAs) – These are the “good fats” that are needed for a healthy heart and brain. Increasing your intake of one type of EFAs—omega-3 oils found in fish and flax oil—can help prevent cardiovascular disease, rheumatoid arthritis, asthma, diabetes, and depression. It can also make your hair and skin more moist; dryness, including dandruff, is a potential sign of omega-3 deficiency. And pregnant or breastfeeding women can help the optimal development of their child’s brain by getting substantial amounts of these important oils.

Take about 1000 milligrams/day of a fish oil supplement that has been “molecularly distilled” for purity; make sure you take enough to get at least 400 milligrams/day of a key ingredient called DHA, which will be listed on the label. (Some people prefer flax oil to fish oil due to being a vegetarian. Unfortunately, most people lack some of the enzymes or co-factors needed to convert flax oil into the long-chain fatty acids your body needs, which already exist in fish oil. If you do choose to use flax oil, make sure you’re taking a good multi-vitamin/multi-mineral supplement as well, for the co-factors it contains.)

To Your Health!

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Mother's Guide to Health in Body, Mind, and Intimate Relationships, published by Penguin. You can see their website at www.nurturemom.com or email them with questions or comments at info@nurturemom.com; unfortunately, a personal reply may not always be possible.)