

# Supplements for Vegans (or anyone)

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## **BARRIERS IN GETTING ENOUGH NUTRIENTS:**

- Low nutrient levels in degraded soils due to industrial agriculture with chemical fertilizer and pesticides
- Low nutrient levels in highly processed foods
- Low nutrient intake because of calorie-restriction
- Low absorption and utilization rates if our digestive systems are weak or slowing down as we age

## **ANIMAL PRODUCTS USED IN SUPPLEMENTS:**

- Gelatin capsules (made of animal bone). Cellulose (vegetable fiber) is used for vegetarian capsules.
- Magnesium stearate (can be made of animal oils or vegetable oils). So look for the company to specify which they use.
- Vitamin D3 (sourced from oil in sheep's wool). D3 is listed as cholecalciferol. The vegan form is D2 (ergocalciferol). There are now vegan sources of D3 from mushrooms, but you'd have to check.
- Omega-3 and DHA often come as fish oil, but there are sources using algae or flaxseed oil.
- Active (preformed) vitamin A is only found in animal food sources. Beta-carotene and mixed carotenoids are the vegetarian/vegan form of vitamin A.

## **MULTIVITAMIN:**

Taking a multivitamin doesn't need to have your full daily levels of every vitamin and mineral. I usually try to find a multi that splits the daily dose into 2 or 3 capsules, and then only take 1 per day.

Best taken with food.

[Pure Vegan Multivitamin](#)

## **VITAMIN D:**

There's none in plant foods, but our bodies produce it naturally when our skin is exposed to the sun. Deficiency symptoms often come up during the winter, and supplements can be really helpful any time of year to maintain optimal levels.

Best taken with some food that has fat in it.

[NOW Foods Vitamin D2](#)

## **VITAMIN B12:**

With no natural plant sources, it's important to be aware of the deficiency symptoms and to take a high quality supplement of B12 regularly – either in your multivitamin or in addition.

Best taken in the morning.

[Ultra B12 Liquid](#)

## **CALCIUM:**

Plant sources are a better choice than dairy, but most people don't eat quite enough food to get the full recommended intake for the day, so a low level supplement or fortified non-dairy milk a good idea.

Best taken in the evening.

[Pure Vegan Calcium/Magnesium](#)

## **ESSENTIAL FATTY ACIDS:**

There are plenty of plant sources of omega-3, and algae-based DHA supplements if you want a concentrated source.

[DEVA Vegan DHA](#)

## **DIGESTIVE ENZYMES:**

If you aren't digesting your food fully, you won't be getting all of the nutrients from it, and they may be treated as allergens by your immune system. It can also be helpful for people who are transitioning to vegan, if they have trouble digesting beans at first.

Best taken before a meal.

[Rainbow Light Plant Enzymes](#)

## **PROBIOTICS:**

They're bacteria, and don't need dairy to grow into a high-quality culture. There are some excellent sources of vegan probiotics that you can take if you've had to take a course of antibiotics or your gut flora has gotten imbalanced for any reason.

Best taken on an empty stomach.

[Rainbow Light ProBioActive](#)

## **FORTIFIED FOODS:**

Fortified foods, like non-dairy milk, cereals and nutritional yeast, are a great way to get nutrients into children or people who don't like taking capsules. But there's no benefit in terms of the nutrition compared to supplements. They are essentially supplements added to food, so it's the same as taking a supplement on its own.

