Your pregnancy supplement guide

GIVING YOUR PREGNANCY A HELPING HAND

We want to do the best for our baby & we want to give our bodies the raw materials needed for optimum growth.

Pregnancy is a marathon like no other, so we also need to fuel our body for the journey ahead.

During pregnancy, many nutrient needs increase & it can be hard to meet those needs through diet alone: particularly if you are plagued with some of those annoying symptoms of pregnancy like nausea, food aversions or heartburn - or if you are simply a picky eater.

Researchers have found that intakes of vitamins D & E, iron, zinc, magnesium & folate are often lower than the recommended amounts for pregnant women.

So it makes sense to give nature a little helping hand if we can...

Where do I start?

There are some key supplements that everyone should consider:

Pregnancy Multi-Vitamin

This should include all-important folate, B vitamins, iron, vitamins C & E, selenium & zinc, to name a few. Ideally it should include choline as well.

Wild Nutrition's Pregnancy prenatal is a lovely blend.

Vitamin D

Our sunshine vitamin, so called because we produce most of our vitamin D from exposure to the sun. In the UK we can only do this from March to September & even then, only between the hours of 11am & 3pm when the sun is highest in the sky. Vitamin D deficiency has been linked to pregnancy complications like hypertension, gestational diabetes & preterm birth.

Vitamin D is a goldilocks supplement: you don't want too little, nor do you want too much, which can lead to toxicity. You may have enough in your pregnancy supplement, you may need a little bit more.

Testing is recommended & can be done via your GP, Medichecks, Thriva or Better You.

Recommended levels for pregnancy are 90 - 100 nmol/L).

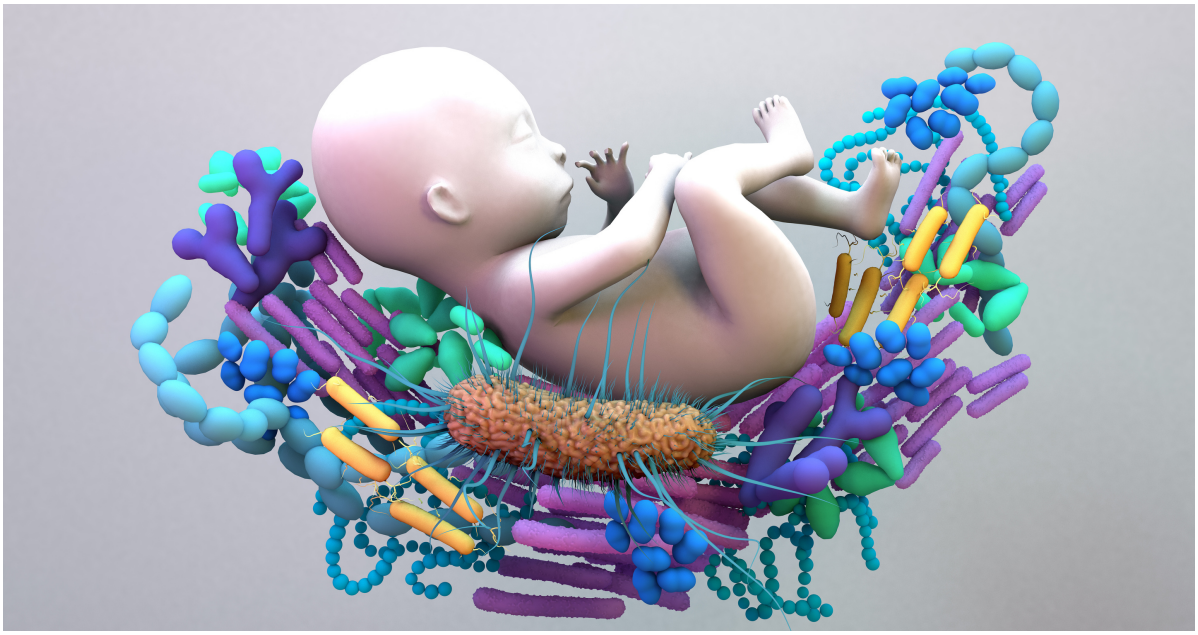
Better You do a very affordable oral spray for good absorption.

Omega 3 oils (EPA / DHA)

Fatty acids are essential for cell health, maintaining good progesterone levels, for foetal brain development & they are anti-inflammatory. They also act as an anti-coagulant which may reduce blood clotting & miscarriage risk. It's hard to get what we need from diet, so supplementing is important.

HOWEVER, if you have been prescribed blood thinners (baby aspirin, heparin etc) please discuss supplementation with your consultant before taking.

Recommended: *Bare Biology Mums & Bumps.*



Probiotics

Feed your gut bugs! Did you know we have trillions of bacteria that live in your gut & various other cavities in your body (mouth, lungs, reproductive tract...)? What's more, they are essential for good health & the health of your baby!

It used to be thought that the uterus was a sterile environment & babies were only inoculated with their mother's bacteria during birth. We now understand that a mother's microbiome (that's what we call this community of bugs) can be passed to your baby while we are pregnant & these bacteria can help to influence the health of children all through life.

Probiotics boost the microbiome. There are special probiotic supplements designed for pregnancy.

OptiBac for Pregnancy is suitable for pregnancy, post-birth & breastfeeding.

A word about folate...

Most of us are familiar with folic acid – & with good reason.
It's probably the nutrient that has received the most attention for pregnancy.
However, folic acid is a synthetic compound: it's the man-made version of folate.

Folate is essential to support the production of that precious DNA in a developing baby's cells. During pregnancy we have a 10-20 fold increase in folate requirements. It's estimated that taking enough 'folic acid' while pregnant may reduce the risk of neural tube defects (ie. spina bifida) by as much as 70%.
Adequate levels may also be protective against cleft lip, cleft palate, autistic disorders & some congenital heart defects, as well as small gestational age.

Some people have difficulty converting folic acid to folate (this is where MTHFR comes in) so a growing number of pregnancy supplements now contain folate., rather than folic acid.

But don't just rely on your daily supplement. Aim to include folate-rich foods in your diet every day to boost stores.

Eg. Dark leafy green vegetables, lentils & chickpeas

Vegetarian or Vegan?

A well-managed vegetarian or vegan diet has many benefits but we need to be aware that there are some key nutrients that are a challenge to obtain from plant-based foods alone.

Vegan pregnancy multivitamin:
Wild Nutrition (vegetarian), *Cytoplan* (vegan)

Choline:
Vital for embryonic brain, neural tube development & placental function.
Eggs, salmon, red meat & poultry are some of our richest sources, with two eggs providing close to the recommended 450mg intake for pregnancy. Plant-based sources include broccoli, shiitake mushrooms, peanut butter, but in far smaller concentrations.
Brands: *Solgar* & *Cytoplan*

Vegan Omega 3:
Brands: *Opti3, Cytoplan* & *Nordic Naturals*

Testing is recommended to ensure adequate levels of:
B12
Iron
Vitamin D

Important:

Good quality supplements are potent. It's why they work.
They interact with drugs & health conditions, as well as with each other.
If you are on medications please speak to
a fertility / pregnancy nutritionist or your consultant to get
a programme tailored to you.

Take all supplements at least 2 hours away from medications.
If you have been prescribed levothyroxine you must take your supplements at least 3 hours away from your medication.

PREGNANCY AFTER LOSS SPECIAL OFFER:

The Natural Dispensary stock practitioner grade supplements.
Use the code **ALHALL10** for a 10% discount on your chosen supplements.
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