

**The CDC recently reported that one in three American adults has prediabetes, and most don't know they have it.** Prediabetes often has no clear symptoms, so it often goes undetected until serious health problems show up.

**Prediabetes is a serious disorder** that raises the risk of developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke and generally poor health.

**Risk factors for prediabetes include** family history of diabetes and being overweight and inactive. Add smoking to the list — smokers are significantly more likely to develop diabetes than nonsmokers.

**If you've been diagnosed with prediabetes,** lifestyle changes — and medication, if necessary — can bring sugar levels back to a healthy range.

### Two steps to lower prediabetes risk:

- 1. Develop healthier eating habits.** Choose whole foods (such as vegetables, fruit, beans, fish, poultry, nuts and whole grains), while reducing the intake of highly processed foods and sweets. That can help you control or lose weight, and stabilize blood sugar levels.
- 2. Exercise moderately** (such as brisk walking) at least 150 minutes a week. Maintaining moderate weight loss and regular exercise can improve your body's use of insulin — the key to healthy blood sugar. More exercise, moderate or vigorous, is even better.

**Young people are also at risk for developing diabetes early in life.** Nearly one in five adolescents (ages 12 to 18) and one in four young adults (ages 19 to 34) are living with prediabetes, according to a 2019 CDC study. Higher rates were seen in youths who were male, obese or Hispanic.

**Time to get tested?** If you or your teens have any of the risk factors noted above, ask your health care provider about testing. Prediabetes can be targeted and reversed. Learn more at [cdc.gov/diabetes/risktest/index.html](https://cdc.gov/diabetes/risktest/index.html).

## Vitamins and Minerals: Who Needs What

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

**Every vitamin and mineral play a different role in the body, and they are all important.** They support the health of our bones and teeth; are part of blood and tissue; and have roles in building hormones and supporting the immune system.

**Most people get the majority of their vitamins and minerals from food.** You can, too. At each meal, fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables, a quarter with whole grains and a quarter with protein-rich foods (legumes, fish, chicken, eggs, dairy, etc.).

**Of course, healthy eating is hard to achieve every day.** A low-dose multivitamin-mineral supplement may help boost your nutrition on days when you don't eat well. But they don't contain the protein, fiber and calories found in food, **so supplements can never replace a nutritious diet.**

**Remember, you can have too much of a good thing.** The more is better philosophy doesn't apply to vitamin and mineral supplements, since high doses can be harmful — especially for vitamin A, vitamin B<sub>6</sub>, vitamin E and iron.

**Supplements are beneficial for people with nutrient deficiencies,** but there's little utility in taking them if you're already getting enough nutrients from food. Individual vitamin and mineral supplements are most useful when you have a specific deficiency as diagnosed by your health care provider, or if you fall into one of these categories:

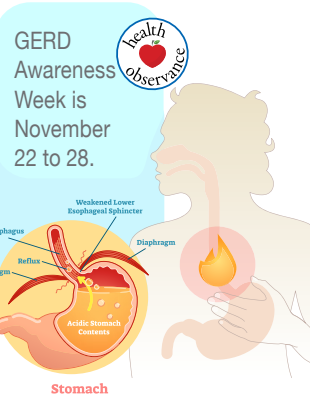
- Women of child-bearing age need to take folic acid.
- Pregnant women require extra iron.
- Men and women over age 50 need vitamin D.
- Vegans and older adults require vitamin B<sub>12</sub>.



**Important: Check with your health care provider or dietitian** before taking supplements to ensure they won't interfere with the medications you take.



# Get Ahead of GERD



**Don't let gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) get in the way of celebrating Turkey Day.** Thanksgiving is a time for family feasts — and overeating is often a part of the celebration.

**Unfortunately, overindulgence in food and drink can trigger or worsen the symptoms** for those with GERD, a common and often chronic condition. Symptoms include frequent heartburn, painful swallowing, nausea and regurgitation of acid.

**You can get ahead of GERD and often help prevent it with these strategies:**

- Over-the-counter medications, including antacids, H2 blockers (such as famotidine) and the more potent proton pump inhibitors (e.g., omeprazole and lansoprazole) can calm GERD symptoms. Take them only as needed; consult your health care provider.
- When you eat is important, too. Avoid eating at least two to three hours before bedtime. Commit to not overeating. Avoid greasy or spicy foods and overdoing caffeine and alcoholic drinks.
- Work on losing excess weight to decrease pressure on your lower esophageal sphincter muscles, which normally keep food from rising into your esophagus.
- If GERD symptoms persist, talk to your provider. You may need additional tests or treatments. Some medications may worsen the symptoms.

## Bacterial vs. Viral — What's Bugging You?

**Bacteria and viruses are microscopic organisms that can produce infections.** Both types of microbes can cause mild, moderate, severe and long-term diseases. The major differences?

**Bacteria thrive in many different environments.** Most are harmless; some help you digest food, destroy diseases and fight cancer cells. Infections caused by bacteria include strep throat, tuberculosis and urinary tract infections.

**Viruses are smaller than bacteria and require living hosts** — people, animals and plants — to multiply and survive. Some are beneficial. A virus can invade your cells, attacking the liver, blood, respiratory and other systems resulting in widespread infectious diseases, such as common colds, chickenpox, COVID-19 and AIDS.

**Determining whether a bacteria or virus is causing your symptoms can be confusing.** Several ailments, such as pneumonia, meningitis and diarrhea, can be caused by either bacteria or viruses, and trigger similar symptoms (fever, vomiting, coughing) that prompt the immune system to eliminate infection.

**Vaccines have drastically decreased viral diseases** including polio, measles and chickenpox, and can prevent influenza, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, HPV and other infections. Vaccines work by stimulating the production of antibodies that help provide immunity against diseases.

**Antibiotic drugs can kill bacteria but are not effective against viruses.** Treating viral infections focuses on controlling symptoms as the infection runs its course.

**Meanwhile, health organizations advise against using antibiotics unless there is clear evidence of bacterial infection.** Overuse of antibiotics has contributed to widespread antibiotic resistance. Worldwide, 700,000 people die each year due to drug-resistant diseases, according to the World Health Organization.

## Cybersecurity Confidential

**Whether you use a computer for your job or for games and hobbies, you know that even one cybersecurity breach can put your work, identity and privacy at risk.** The FTC offers these basics to help reduce the chance of a cyber attack. Always employ these basic measures for your desktop, laptop, tablet and smart devices:

1. Update your software. Set automatic updates so you don't forget.
2. Encrypt all devices — laptops, personal computers, smartphones, tablets, routers, backup drives and cloud storage.
3. Backup and secure files. Store all important files on an external hard drive or cloud so you're covered if the unthinkable happens.
4. Require strong passwords. Make sure passwords contain at least 12 characters that are a mix of numbers, upper- and lowercase letters and symbols. **Note:** Your employer may require you to change your password periodically and take other preventive measures.
5. Use multifactor authentication, which means that you require additional steps beyond logging on with a password.

To learn more, search for **cybersecurity** at [ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov).

**Note:** Due to production lead time, this issue may not reflect the current COVID-19 situation in some or all regions of the U.S. For the most up-to-date information visit [coronavirus.gov](https://www.coronavirus.gov).

The **Smart Moves Toolkit**, including this issue's printable download, **5 Ways to Stop Winter Weight Gain** is at [personalbest.com/extras/20V11tools](https://personalbest.com/extras/20V11tools).

