

## Prenatal Vitamin Supplements

Prenatal vitamin supplements are vitamin supplements that a woman can take on a daily basis to ensure that she is obtaining appropriate quantities of essential nutrients during pregnancy. It is important for a woman to discuss with her medical practitioner which prenatal supplements, if any, she should take and which she should avoid. It is essential that all prenatal vitamin supplements are only taken under the advisement of a medical professional. There are some prenatal vitamin supplements that can prove dangerous for a pregnant woman to take and she has to be especially cautious.

The most important point to consider when deciding which prenatal vitamin supplements to take is which one contains certain nutrients that are beneficial to the woman and her developing baby. The majority of adults do not need additional vitamins as they receive sufficient from a balanced diet but a pregnant woman often needs prenatal vitamin supplements, especially for folic acid and iron. However, it is essential that she ensures that the prenatal vitamin supplements that she takes to provide one particular nutrient do not contain potentially harmful amounts of another.

One of the most toxic types of prenatal vitamin that a pregnant woman has to be extremely cautious of is vitamin A. For this reason the most suitable prenatal vitamins for pregnant women who require extra vitamin A are those which contain vitamin A in the form of beta-carotene. Beta-carotene is a nutrient that is found in fruits and vegetables and is converted into vitamin A in the body. Prenatal vitamin supplements that contain vitamin A from animal products can cause birth defects when taken in high doses during pregnancy but beta-carotene is a much safer prenatal vitamin as it is not toxic in high doses.

It is essential that a woman discusses prenatal vitamin supplements with her health practitioner at her first prenatal check-up. They can examine her current dietary requirements and assess whether prenatal vitamin supplements are necessary to increase the amount of nutrients that she has available for her baby. Often a doctor will recommend that a pregnant woman takes a course of a folic acid vitamin supplement during the first trimester of her pregnancy. Folic acid is the most commonly prescribed prenatal supplement for the months prior to becoming pregnant as well and it is essential for the health and growth of the baby, especially the brain functions. Iron is another prenatal vitamin supplement that is recommended to prevent the mother suffering from anaemia due to the demands that the baby puts on her iron consumption.