

Take your vitamins

[Family](#)



“ Take Your Vitamins” “ Don’t forget to take your vitamins,” is a common phrase that parents have reminded their children for generations. Yet, most people do not ever remember, more so, most Americans could not tell you why most of the different vitamins are good for us; except, of course, the old reliable vitamin C. So the situation posed in the textbook scenario faced by the hypothetical Judy is very realistic. (Manore and Thompson 189) Standing in a grocery store aisle staring at all the differing foods that now offer the healthier inclusion of vitamins and minerals is not unfamiliar to us all. These foods called “ functional foods,” or more scientifically nutraceuticals, offer greater benefits than the same standard foods do not. A really important element of the “ functional foods” is that most people are probably not aware is that they are not directly regulated, at this time, by the FDA, the Food and Drug Administration. This means that no one, outside the company’s manufacturing the products, are really guaranteeing the absolute safety, purity, or quality of these products. (Manore and Thompson 189) Because the nutraceuticals are not drugs, and are not really capable of being dangerous, then here is no concern about where and to what they are added. To be perfectly honest, is not safety that is in question, but, whether, or not, they are in fact beneficial. Adding vitamins and minerals to granola bars, breakfast cereals, and dairy products is well and fine, ideally designed to encourage people to purchase those products. But is that really a cunning way to get people to “ take their vitamins” or a clever way to get consumers to spend more on a product that benefits are potentially questionable at best. Also, as is the hypothetical case of Judy, she considers buying the soda with the vitamins added figuring that it must be better for her. (Manore and Thompson 189) But just because the given product has newly added

ingredients does not mean that the food overall is healthier for you. If your favorite fast food restaurant added all the needed daily necessity of all the vitamins and minerals to their tastiest and greasiest french fries, would you start eating those fries everyday because they are healthier? Many of the foods these ingredients are added to are not necessarily healthy for you regardless of the vitamin content. Marketing them as health foods may do far more harm than good. The United States Pharmaceutical Convention is a non-profit organization founded in 1820 by eleven physicians concerned with how chaotic and disorganized the realm of drugs and other medications actually was. (“ United States Pharmaceutical Convention”) They work with multiple countries to guarantee the quality of what is consumed by the public. The USP set the standards by which all the drugs, dietary supplements, and food ingredients are manufactured and distributed. The organization is made up of 800 volunteers, including members internationally. They presently have a “ farm to fork” initiative. Simply meaning that they work to be involved in the quality of , what is consumed from where it comes from to where it goes, before it ends up in cabinets your home.(“ United States Pharmaceutical Convention”) This becomes harder today, because the ingredients of foods tend to come from multiple sources in multiple locations. Presently, manufacturers are expected to be completely honest in labeling these products so as not to mislead the public. (Manore and Thompson 189) However, that does not mean the public will not be. Although many Americans are health conscious, does not mean that they are health educated. For this reason there is an incentive to encourage the FDA to get involved in regulating and overseeing these “ functional foods” but until this happens, as the text stated, the “...consumers are on their

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own." (Manore and Thompson 189) References Manore, Melinda, and Janice Thompson. Nutrition for Life. 2nd. San Francisco: Benjamin/Cummings, 2009. 189. Print. . " USP." United States Pharmaceutical Convention. N. p., 2012. Web. 26 May 2012. <http://www.usp.org/about-usp>