

# How to Give Multivitamins to Pregnant Women

Women have an increased need for vitamins and minerals throughout pregnancy. Providing supplemental nutrition in the form of a daily multivitamin is an excellent way to meet this increased need.

- Ensuring adequate nutrition improves the pregnancy outcome.
- The earlier a woman begins taking a multivitamin and the higher the adherence to taking 1 multivitamin each day, the greater the impact the vitamins and minerals may have on her health and the health of her child.



## Vitamins and minerals, like those found in a multivitamin, can help:

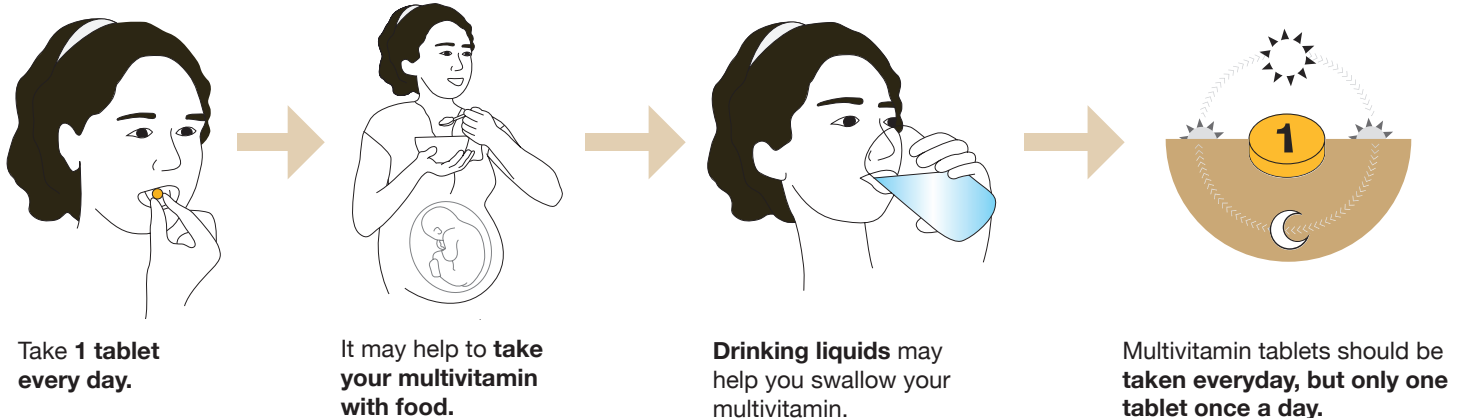
- Improve birth weight, decrease the number of small-for-gestational-age (SGA) newborn infants, decrease preterm births, and reduce infant mortality at 6 months of age.
- Reduce anemia, night blindness, and other symptoms caused by vitamin and mineral deficiencies.
- Support a healthy immune system.
- Promote physical and cognitive development in infants.

## Recommendations:

- Infants during the first six months of life should be exclusively breastfed. Then at 6 months, begin complementary feeding.
- Pregnant women and children starting at 6 months of age should eat a nutritious diet that includes a variety of brightly colored fruits and vegetables, animal products such as dairy and meat, nuts, oils and legumes.

## Multivitamin Dosing Instructions

### Taking a Multivitamin Tablet





Bottles of multivitamins may be given to women to take home for daily use throughout her entire pregnancy. If there are multivitamins remaining in the bottle after pregnancy, it is okay to take the remaining tablets during lactation/breastfeeding.

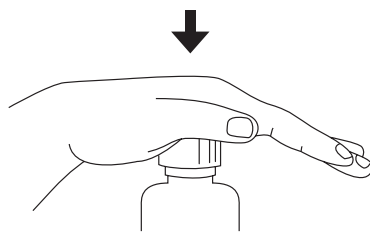
### Storage:

Store in a **COOL, DRY** place, between 15°-30°C .  
Keep bottle tightly closed.

### How to Open Child-Resistant Caps:

Before allowing mothers to take bottles of multivitamins home, ensure that they are able to open the child resistant cap.

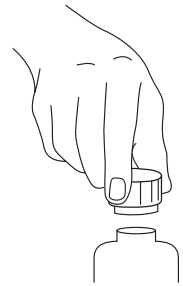
#### Screw Top Bottle:



Use palm of hand to press firmly down on cap.



Turn cap in the direction indicated by the arrows (counter-clockwise).



Remove cap.

### Possible Side Effects of Multivitamins:

When taken as directed, multivitamins are not expected to cause serious side effects; however, some women experience upset stomach, constipation, headaches, or an unusual or unpleasant taste in their mouth after taking the multivitamins. Many of these side effects are temporary and will go away as the body adjusts to the multivitamin. Take multivitamins with water, snacks or at bedtime to reduce side effects.



**DO NOT EAT:** The little packet inside the bottle contains silica gel; although it is non-toxic and not harmful if swallowed (it is basically sand), it should not be eaten. The packet should remain in the bottle/container as it helps to absorb moisture (water) and maintains the quality of the vitamins and minerals. However, caution should be taken to keep the packet out of the reach of small children, because the silica gel packet may be a choking hazard.



**WARNING:** Accidental overdose of iron-containing products is a leading cause of fatal poisoning in children under 6. **KEEP THIS PRODUCT OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN.** In case of accidental overdose, call a doctor or poison control center immediately.