

## TIP 5

**Choose supplements which are tooth friendly.**

Supplements that are made from gums often stick between teeth where bacteria can thrive. Avoid supplements containing sugar or ensure that your children brush their teeth after taking them.



## TIP 6

**Understand how much your child is taking.**

It's important to understand the difference between mg (milligrams) and mcg (micrograms). It takes 1000mcg to make 1mg! Your supplement may not contain as much of a nutrient as you thought it did, so read the label carefully. You may also see the term 'IU'. IU stands for International Units. If you are not sure which product you should be taking, ask your health care professional.

1 mg = 1,000 mcg

## TIP 7

**Avoid artificial colours and flavours.**

Buy products that have no artificial colours or flavours. Also look for products which are preservative free and allergen free. This information may be listed on either the front or the back of the pack.



## TIP 8

**Choose calcium supplements containing vitamin D and magnesium.**

Ensure calcium supplements contain vitamin D and magnesium. Vitamin D is essential for calcium absorption and magnesium is important for bone strength and muscle function, so if your child needs additional calcium, a combination supplement is usually a better choice.



# Kids Vitamins & supplements

# 8

## top tips

By Accredited Practising Dietitian Melanie McGrice

As seen on



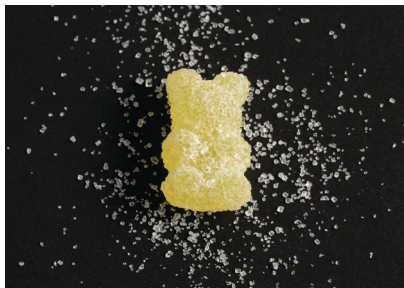
## TIP 1

**Always check the back of the pack.** Don't fall for gimmicks and claims that appear on the front of the label. Look for the 'contains' section and compare the amounts of active ingredients between products. Also look for 'Aust L' on the pack. This means that the supplement has been listed with the Therapeutic Goods Administration. You should find it on the bottom of the pack on most vitamins and supplements.



## TIP 2

**Look for the words "contains sugar".** Avoid supplements with the words 'contains sugar' on the back of the pack. Many supplements are visibly coated with sugar. These can easily be confused as treats and need to be dosed appropriately. There are plenty of sugar free supplements available, just ask your health care professional.



## TIP 3

**Choose supplements in opaque bottles.** Some vitamins degrade rapidly when exposed to light e.g. Vitamin C, so avoid supplements in clear bottles. They may look prettier but when buying health supplements, there are more important therapeutic considerations. You should also remember to store them away from heat and seal the lid well, as air and heat will also compromise the life of your supplements.



## TIP 4

**Choose fish oil high in DHA.** When buying fish oil capsules, look for brands with the highest DHA (docosahexanoic acid) content. Research suggests that DHA is important for brain function, cognitive health (think, learn & remember) and behaviour. Turn to the back of the pack and look for products which contain a minimum of 300mg of DHA per capsule.



Melanie McGrice  
Accredited Practising Dietitian



"So many parents tell me that they are confused about which supplements to buy for their children. Although I'd recommend always asking your healthcare professional for individually tailored advice, here are some handy tips to help you decide the best vitamins for your kids."

Vitamins & Supplements should not replace a balanced diet. Always read the label and use only as directed.