

# Dietary Supplements in the Time of COVID-19

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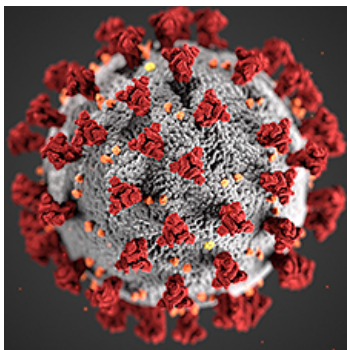
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May 20, 2021

## Dietary Supplements in the Time of COVID-19



Do you have questions about whether any vitamins, minerals, herbs, or other dietary supplement ingredients are useful during COVID-19? Have you wondered if supplements can boost immunity, reduce disease severity, or speed recovery? If someone is getting sufficient amounts of essential nutrients, does getting *more* help?

The Office of Dietary Supplements (ODS) has published a new fact sheet for health professionals, [Dietary Supplements in the Time of COVID-19](#), that answers these questions and more. It summarizes the state of the science on the safety and effectiveness of 11 dietary supplement ingredients from andrographis to zinc and helps

set the record straight about what the available evidence shows.

Some studies, for example, link low levels of vitamin D with higher incidence of COVID-19 and more severe disease, but a recently completed clinical trial found that a single high-dose vitamin D supplement did not affect the length of hospitalization or risk of mortality among patients hospitalized with moderate to severe COVID-19.

What about elderberry? Sales of this herb skyrocketed in the wake of the pandemic, but no studies show that elderberry helps prevent or treat COVID-19.

And probiotics? A small clinical trial in patients hospitalized with COVID-19 and receiving medications found some promising results using a probiotic formulation containing *Streptococcus*, *Lactobacillus*, and *Bifidobacterium* strains, but additional research is needed.

Learn more details about these and other ingredients in our new fact sheet and watch for updates as we incorporate newly published research in the weeks and months ahead.

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### Have more questions about dietary supplements? Ask the Office of Dietary Supplements (ODS).

ODS provides general information about dietary supplement ingredients in response to questions from consumers, health professionals, students, and others. While ODS cannot answer specific medical questions, make referrals, or give personal guidance on the use of dietary supplements, ODS's registered dietitians on staff reply to each inquiry and give useful, scientific, and evidence-based information. Send your questions about dietary supplements to ODS: [ods.od.nih.gov/contact](https://ods.od.nih.gov/contact).



## COVID-19 is an emerging, rapidly evolving situation.

Get the latest public health information from CDC: <https://www.coronavirus.gov>

Get the latest research information from NIH: <https://www.nih.gov/coronavirus>

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### About ODS

The [Office of Dietary Supplements \(ODS\)](#) is part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the nation's medical research agency—supporting scientific studies that turn discovery into health.

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