

MEDIA RELEASE
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Women lacking key nutrients

Women are not getting the nutrients they need and their health could be compromised.

A new review of the nutritional status of women in the UK has found that women's diets remain lacking in key nutrients, particularly iron, vitamin D, calcium and folate.

The report published in the latest edition of the British Nutrition Foundation's Nutrition Bulletin said that women's diets are also too high in saturated fat and salt, and low in fibre, oily fish and fruits and vegetables.

Michelle Palmer, Executive Director of Natural Products New Zealand says that taking supplements is a way to ensure our bodies are getting the nutrients we need.

"While fortification of food items is one way to deal to potential deficiencies, supplements can be taken by those people who need them.

"At different stages in their lives women need more of certain minerals. Pregnancy and menopause are two key times when our bodies need extra help," she says.

The study highlighted that 20% of women of childbearing years were low in iron, 11% were low in Vitamin B2 (riboflavin), 9% were low in magnesium and 6% had low intakes of Vitamin A.

Levels of Vitamin D, folate, calcium and Omega-3 were also found to be below recommended daily intake levels.

Dr Shaun Holt, medical advisor and researcher agrees that women might not be getting the right nutrients at the right time.

"Additional intake of folate has always been recommended around pregnancy to lower the risk of birth defects and at the other end of the spectrum, women need to be thinking about their calcium and vitamin D levels post menopause. Inadequate intake of these nutrients can lead to lower bone density and brittle bones," says Dr Holt.

"Even those women eating a balanced healthy diet may need extra supplementation at certain times in their lives."

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Note: Natural Products New Zealand (NPNZ) represents over 80% of the Natural Products industry. Based on a survey of wholesale and retail sales information, export data and industry surveys, NPNZ's members make up the overwhelming majority of the natural products industry in terms of product lines, turnover, employment and exports.

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