Read the Back

QUICK REFERENCE TO ANATOMY OF A LABEL

Supplement Label Cheat Sheet

The Anatomy of a Supplement Label

1 Product Identity

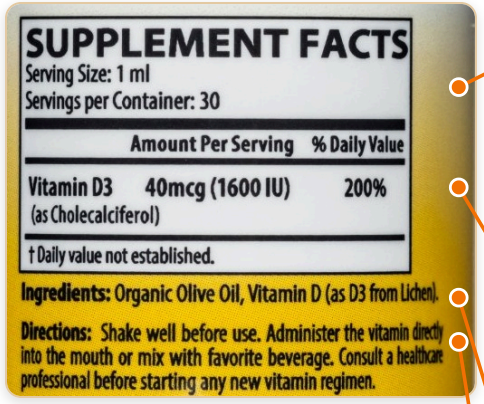
Look for "dietary supplement" and the product name. One product can cover several age groups, and the directions show the right amount for each.

2 Claims

A claim like "supports bone health" is the company's own statement. It's not FDA approved. Follow the * to the disclaimer.

3 Net Quantity

How much is in the container, as a count, weight or volume (e.g., 60 capsules or 30 mL). It's not the number of servings. The back tells you that.



Back of the bottle, enlarged



4 Serving Size & Servings Per Container

Every amount on the panel is for one serving. Take half a serving, get half the amount. To compare prices, divide the cost by servings, not bottles.

5 Amount Per Serving & % Daily Value (%DV)

How much you get per serving and how it compares with the FDA Daily Value. It's a general guide, not a personal target.

6 Ingredient Names & Form

The words in parentheses show the form or source (e.g., magnesium as magnesium citrate). Check here, and any "Contains" line, for allergens.

7 Directions & Important Information

Check the amount, how often, and how to store it. Also look for safety information, such as "Keep out of reach of children."

Quick Q&A

Q Does FDA approve supplements?

A No. The FDA regulates supplements and labeling, but it doesn't approve products before they're sold.

Q What does "%DV" tell me?

A How much one serving gives you compared with an FDA reference amount. It's a general guide, not your personal need. A product for more than one age group may show a column for each.

Q Is more than 100% DV too much?

A Not always. It depends on the nutrient and your individual needs. Check the Upper Limit (UL) and talk with your healthcare professional if you're unsure.

Q What are "other ingredients"?

A Inactive ingredients (like a capsule, filler, or flavor) that aren't in the Supplement Facts panel. Check it, and the panel above it, for allergens, sugar or dyes.

Q What is a Proprietary Blend?

A A mix of ingredients listed as a total amount. The individual amounts may not be shown.

Q Can I take more than one supplement with the same vitamin?

A Often, yes. Add up that vitamin across everything you take, including fortified foods, and stay under the Upper Limit (UL). When in doubt, ask your healthcare professional.

Key Label Terms to Know

Serving Size
The amount used to measure nutrients (e.g., 1 mL, 1 capsule).

mg & mcg
Units of weight. 1 mg = 1,000 mcg.

IU
A unit used for some vitamins. Each vitamin converts to mcg or mg differently.

Daily Value (DV)
A reference amount for many nutrients. It helps you compare products.

Upper Limit (UL)
The highest daily amount that's unlikely to cause harm, from all sources (food and supplements).

Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA)
The daily amount that meets the needs of nearly all healthy people. A target to reach, not a limit.

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Sources: FDA Dietary Supplement Labeling Guide; NIH Office of Dietary Supplements.