ESL News Stories

Level-graded English lessons with reading, listening, activities, and discussion.

Lesson Info

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Supplement Use Grows Despite Questions

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Lesson Content

- Warm-up, Vocab List, Reading and Audio
- Understanding: Main Idea, True or False, Multiple Choice
- Language: Words That Go Together, New Sentences
- Use It: Discussion Builder, Discussion Questions
- Answers

Supplement Use Grows Despite Questions

Why do you think people choose to take supplements?

a) To support their health

b) To have more energy

c) To fill gaps in their diet



A bottle of supplements.

Vocab List

supplement (n.) — a product taken to add vitamins, minerals, or other helpful substances to a person's diet

survey (n.) — a set of questions used to collect information from many people

proven (adj.) — shown to be true by research or evidence

nutrient (n.) — a substance in food that the body needs to grow and stay healthy

omega-3 (n.) — a type of fat found in foods such as fish that is important for health

evidence (n.) — facts or information that show whether something is true

dose (n.) — the amount of a medicine or other substance taken at one time

herbal (adj.) — made from plants and used for health or medicine

protein (n.) — a substance in foods such as meat, eggs, beans, and dairy that helps the body build and repair muscle

READING

Supplement Use Grows Despite Questions

A new survey suggests that nearly eight in ten adults in the United States take at least one supplement. However, medical experts say that many supplements have little proven benefit.

The Pew Research Center survey included 3,554 adults. Vitamins and minerals were the most common products, used by 67 percent of people in the survey. About one in three people said they used protein powders, bars, or drinks. Use of protein supplements was highest among adults under 50.

Experts say supplements can be important when people do not get enough of an important nutrient or to help prevent health problems in babies at birth. However, most people take supplements for other reasons. For example, people may take omega-3 supplements to improve heart or brain health, but most medical studies have not found clear evidence of these benefits.

Social media may be helping to increase interest in supplements, especially protein products. Yet most people already get enough protein from food, experts say. Strength exercises, such as lifting weights, are also more important than extra protein for building or maintaining muscle.

Supplements can be convenient, but they can also create risks. High doses of vitamins or minerals can be harmful, and some herbal products can damage the liver or affect how medicines work. Experts recommend people speak with a doctor before taking a supplement.

UNDERSTANDING

1. Main Idea

Choose one:

- ○ Many people use supplements, but experts say they often have limited benefits and possible risks.
- ○ Protein supplements are becoming more popular because social media promotes muscle building.
- ○ Supplements are mainly helpful for people who do not get enough nutrients from food.

2. True or False

1. Most people need protein supplements because they cannot get enough protein from food.
TRUE FALSE

2. Supplements may be important for people who do not get enough of a needed nutrient.
TRUE FALSE

3. Medical studies have clearly shown that omega-3 supplements improve heart and brain health. TRUE FALSE

4. Experts recommend speaking with a doctor before taking a supplement. TRUE FALSE

3. Multiple Choice

1. According to the survey, which supplements were most common among the people surveyed?

a) Protein powders, bars, and drinks

b) Vitamins and minerals

c) Herbal products

2. Which group had the highest use of protein supplements?

a) Adults under 50

b) Adults over 50

c) Babies at birth

3. What may be helping to increase interest in supplements, especially protein products?

a) Medical studies

b) Social media

c) Strength exercises

LISTEN CLOSELY

4. Listen and Fill Gaps

Listen to the audio on eslnewsstories.com and complete the gaps below:

A new (1) _____ suggests that nearly eight in ten adults in the United States take at least one supplement. However, medical experts say that many supplements have little proven benefit.

The Pew Research Center survey included 3,554 adults. Vitamins and minerals were the most (2) _____ products, used by 67 percent of people in the survey. About one in three people said they used protein powders, bars, or drinks. Use of protein supplements was highest among adults under 50.

Experts say supplements can be important when people do not get enough of an important nutrient or to help (3) _____ health problems in babies at birth. However, most people take supplements for other reasons. For example, people may take omega-3 supplements to improve heart or brain health, but most medical studies have not found clear (4) _____ of these benefits.

Social media may be helping to increase interest in supplements, especially protein products. Yet most people already get enough protein from food, experts say. Strength exercises, such as (5) _____ weights, are also more important than extra protein for building or maintaining muscle.

Supplements can be convenient, but they can also create risks. High doses of vitamins or minerals can be (6) _____, and some herbal products can damage the liver or affect how medicines work. Experts recommend people speak with a doctor before taking a supplement.

5. Words That Go Together

Match each word with the words it goes with:

1. take	a) _____ doses
2. proven	b) _____ evidence
3. protein	c) _____ powder
4. clear	d) _____ benefit
5. high	e) _____ a supplement

6. New Sentences

dose / evidence / herbal / nutrient / protein / proven / supplement / survey

1. The school sent families a _____ with questions about bus rides.
2. This idea is not yet _____, so scientists want to study it more.
3. The wet ground was _____ that it had rained during the night.
4. The nurse explained how much medicine to take in each _____.
5. This _____ soap is made from plants.
6. Eggs give your body _____ to help build muscle.

7. Discussion Builder

Choose the best phrase for each gap:

1. Q: Omega-3 is found in foods such as fish. Would you rather get nutrients from food or from a supplement? Explain your preference.

   A: I would rather get nutrients from food _____ meals can provide several healthy things at once.

   because / although / unless

2. Q: Herbal products may seem natural to some people. Does "natural" always mean safe in your opinion? Why or why not?

   A: "Natural" does not always mean safe. _____ some herbal products can affect how medicines work.

   For example, / Instead, / However,

8. Discussion Questions

1. What was your first reaction to the survey finding that nearly eight in ten adults in the United States take supplements?
2. Do you, or do people you know, take vitamins, protein products, or other supplements? What are the main reasons?
3. Why do you think supplements are so popular, even when their benefits are not always proven?
4. Many people use protein powders, bars, and drinks. In what situations do these products seem useful or convenient?
5. The article says that strength exercise can be more important than extra protein for building muscle. What are some realistic ways people can add exercise to a busy week?
6. Omega-3 is found in foods such as fish. Would you rather get nutrients from food or from a supplement? Explain your preference.
7. Why might younger adults be especially interested in protein products? Do you see this trend in advertising, sports, or social media?
8. Herbal products may seem natural to some people. Does "natural" always mean safe in your opinion? Why or why not?

Listening: (1) survey, (2) common, (3) prevent, (4) evidence, (5) lifting, (6) harmful

Main Idea: Many people use supplements, but experts say they often have limited benefits and possible risks.

True or False:

1. False. Experts say that most people already get enough protein from the food they eat.
2. True. Experts say supplements can help when people do not get enough of an important nutrient.
3. False. The story says that most medical studies have not found clear evidence of these benefits.
4. True. High doses and some herbal products can be harmful or affect medicines, so experts recommend speaking with a doctor.

Multiple Choice: b, a, b

Vocabulary:

1. take: a supplement
2. proven: benefit
3. protein: powder
4. clear: evidence
5. high: doses

New Sentences: 1. survey; 2. proven; 3. evidence; 4. dose; 5. herbal; 6. protein

Discussion Builder:

Hints: 1) Giving a reason for a preference. 2) Giving an example to support an opinion.

1. because
2. For example,