


Ask Leyla: What's your opinion on yeast-based and whole food vitamins?

Q: Can you offer your opinion on whole food multivitamins that seem to have a yeast basis? Is the yeast base questionable even for someone without a yeast allergy or a propensity to yeast infections, or would you advise against these types of multivitamin supplements for anyone?

A: Back in the day, many vitamins, especially the B complex vitamins were made from "nutritional yeast." I still hear of people using nutritional yeast to this day—in their smoothies, for instance—and they swear by it (or old habits die hard, I guess). Because yeast flakes have a slightly "cheesy" flavor, it's often used—especially by vegans—as a flavoring for popcorn, among other foods. 

While I have nothing against taking supplements that have been working well for someone, I do like to assess if there may be any adverse reaction(s), or exacerbations of any symptoms. For example, if the person has dysbiosis of the gut or **SIBO**, I would advise against the use of yeast-based supplements.

I would especially advise against these supplements for the person with candida overgrowth (a form of dysbiosis), or someone prone to yeast infections or skin rashes like eczema.

I'm not a fan of using whole food-based supplements because even yeast-free, food-based vitamins, which seem virtuous and thus have become increasingly popular in recent years, come with a caveat. They may trigger food allergies in susceptible individuals. You wouldn't want to take a supplement containing certain fruits like cherries or strawberries (or its extracted isolates) if you're allergic to them. Therein lies the problem for many people with regard to whole food-based supplements.

As you can see, just like with dieting, it's a case of different strokes for different folks.

To your health!