LILY NICHOLS’ RECOMMENDED PRENATAL VITAMINS

As a thank you for purchasing *Real Food for Pregnancy*, here is Lily Nichols’ hand-picked list of prenatal vitamins after extensive review of available options.

Remember that a prenatal vitamin is not a replacement for a real food diet, but more of an “insurance policy” to help meet your nutrient needs.

Also, keep in mind that you may require additional supplementation beyond a prenatal vitamin, depending on your diet and health history (such as iron status, sun exposure, vegetarian/vegan diet, food preferences/allergies, and more).

For a full explanation on considerations for supplementation—and the rationale for the choices in this document—see Chapter 6 of *Real Food for Pregnancy*.

***DISCLAIMER: The information provided in this document is not intended as medical advice. Always consult your qualified healthcare professional before changing your supplements or diet. Lily Nichols assumes no liability for the use or misuse of any information found within this document. Lily is legally not able to provide personalized supplementation or nutrition advice outside of a formal client-dietitian relationship. If you have questions about supplements, including those listed in this document and NOT listed in this document, please defer to your healthcare provider.***

If you don’t already own a copy of *Real Food for Pregnancy*, visit lilynicholsrdn.com/books.

Available in paperback, Kindle, and audiobook.
Most Comprehensive Formulas

**Full Circle Prenatal**

**PROS**
- Exceeds most other prenatal vitamins on the market in terms of nutrients included, bioavailable/bioactive forms, and dosing based on more current research
- Only PNV I’m aware of that includes an evidence-based dose of 4,000 IU vitamin D (potentially eliminating the need for an additional vitamin D supplement; see Ch 6 and 9 of Real Food for Pregnancy and discuss with your healthcare provider when making this decision)
- More choline, magnesium, vitamin E, and glycine than leading competitors
- Extensive testing for heavy metal contamination (rare in the industry)

**CONS**
- 8 capsules per day
- If you’re anemic, this formula contains no iron


**Seeking Health ‘Optimal Prenatal’**

**PROS**
- Exceeds most other prenatal vitamins on the market in terms of nutrients included, bioavailable/bioactive forms, and dosing based on more current research

**CONS**
- 8 capsules per day
- If you’re anemic, this formula contains no iron


***If experiencing first trimester nausea /aversions /gagging or are otherwise averse to taking capsules, consider Seeking Health’s ‘Optimal Prenatal Protein Powder’ (a protein shake that doubles as your prenatal) or Chewable (remarkably good taste). See links below.***

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Fewer Capsules

*Thorne ‘Basic Prenatal’*

**PROS**
- 3 capsules per day
- Includes iron (in a well-absorbed form); also a potential con

**CONS**
- Contains no choline or vitamin K2; a bit low in iodine and selenium
- Iron is included in high quantities, which not every woman needs, particularly in early pregnancy. See Ch 6 and 9 of Real Food for Pregnancy and discuss with your healthcare provider when deciding whether or not to take a prenatal vitamin that includes iron.


If Unable to Take Capsules

*Seeking Health Protein Powder *Protein Power + Prenatal Vitamin* *

**PROS**
- Exceeds most other prenatal vitamins on the market in terms of nutrients included, bioavailable/bioactive forms, and dosing based on more current research
- Same dosage of nutrients as Seeking Health’s Optimal Prenatal vitamin capsules
- Additional source of protein is helpful when managing nausea/aversions
- Low sugar

**CONS**
- If you’re anemic, this formula contains no iron
- More expensive than most prenatal options

Seeking Health Chewable *Chewable Tablet*

**PROS**
- Exceeds most other prenatal vitamins on the market in terms of nutrients included, bioavailable/bioactive forms, and dosing based on more current research
- Surprisingly good taste

**CONS**
- If you're anemic, this formula contains no iron
- Slightly lower concentrations of some nutrients compared to Seeking Health's capsules or protein prenatal vitamin. Still contains far higher concentrations of nutrients compared to other chewable/gummy prenatal vitamins on the market (and even many capsules!).


Smarty Pants ‘Prenatal Complete’ *GUMMY*

**PROS**
- One of the few gummies that uses bioavailable forms of many nutrients, including methylfolate
- Contains a small amount of omega-3s

**CONS**
- High in sugar (daily dose is 6 gummies = 11 grams carbohydrates)
- Contains bare minimum quantities of vitamins (a necessity for a gummy vitamin to stay palatable)
- Low in vitamins B1 and B2, zinc, and choline

***I ONLY suggest this gummy if nausea/aversions prevent you from using one of the above options. Think of this as a last resort and switch to a more complete formula as soon as your symptoms allow.***