



**T**here's no denying that nature has provided for us very well. Had we continued to live a primitive lifestyle we would

be eating an abundance of fresh fruit, berries, vegetables, fish and meat, and as an added benefit, we would have kept fit by foraging and hunting for our food.

Our sophisticated and modern lifestyle is, however, enormously unhealthy due largely to the highly processed, refined and manufactured foodstuffs we consume; the easy availability of ready-prepared take-home meals in plastic containers; and the limited time available for shopping and cooking. A booming industry developed as a result, with the solution of providing vitamins and minerals lacking in the body, with a tablet, a quick fix if you like, but with long-term benefits.

Business people are among the most targeted group of those requiring vitamins and minerals. Manufacturers of nutritional replacement products are aware of the long hours and mental fatigue experienced by those who work in stressful and cut-throat environments. They are also cognisant of the fact that most business people tend to overexert themselves physically at the gym or participate in competitive sports to take the so-called edge off the pressures they face.

But even following a balanced diet and exercising regularly cannot guarantee perfect health given the amount of radioactive radiation we are exposed to from the use of cellphones, wireless devices, microwaves and global positioning systems. We cannot see, feel or hear radio waves but medical reports suggest that these instruments affect our brain activity, blood pressure, heart rate, even fertility. Worse are the effects of fatigue and possible insomnia.

The point is that you can crunch the numbers, crunch the abs and crunch the lettuce and you still won't achieve optimum health and that is precisely why nutritionists, like Vanessa Ascencao of OTC Pharma, highly recommend vitamins and supplements and, in particular, as she refers to it, the miracle that is Spirulina.

'The nutritional profile of Spirulina is like nothing I've seen before. The research that has been undertaken on this food source is remarkable, from successfully treating Chernobyl victims who endured radiation exposure to a comprehensive independent study by NASA looking at Spirulina as a food source for astronauts. The UN and the World Health Organisation have both declared the product as the best food for tomorrow and greatest superfood on earth.

'NASA's initial reports found that 1 kg of Spirulina is the nutritional equivalent 1 000 kg of assorted vegetables or simply put, one gram of Spirulina is equivalent to 1 kg of vegetables,' explains Ascencao.

'The study further proved that Spirulina has dramatic results in combating the effects of radiation exposure, improves the functioning of the thyroid and, in fact, the entire endocrine system. When the endocrine system is suppressed the body manifests symptoms of burnout, adrenal fatigue and stress, and loses the ability to absorb nutrients effectively.'

These indicators accurately reflect the general business professional's health status but, as Ursula Struwig, consulting pharmacist for the Dis-Chem group of pharmacies points out: 'We have become used to feeling fatigue and stress, and perhaps are no longer able to recognise the signs of a body in distress.

'Complementary aids like vitamins are an extremely safe way of looking after your health over a long period. There are so many studies and clinical trials that our knowledge about complimentary medicine has increased substantially, proving that vitamins and supplements can prevent diseases, effectively control body function and improve the quality of life.'

But critics say that we're stimulating optimal functioning of the body with an unnatural version of the mineral or vitamin supplement because so many are synthetically produced. ➔



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