

Are You Taking the Wrong Supplements? Here's How to Know

By Robert Ferguson

One of my clients once showed up with a bag full of supplements. She had powders for energy, capsules for focus, and gummies that promised younger-looking skin. When I asked her why she bought them, her answer was the same one I hear all the time: *"My trainer recommended this one, my friend swears by that one, and I saw an influencer online promoting the rest."*

She was frustrated. Even after spending hundreds of dollars, she felt more tired and bloated than before. Yet, I've also had clients in the same situation swear they've never felt better.

Here's the deal: most people take supplements because a coach, a friend, a network marketer, or an influencer said it "works." But here's the problem: **many supplements don't work the way you think, and some may even cause harm if you don't really need them.**

That's why I wrote this article. My goal is to give you a clear, step-by-step way to sort through supplements so you can recognize what's truly helpful, what's harmful, and what's just a waste of money. Most importantly, I'll show you how to know if you're taking the wrong supplement, using five popular examples: glutathione, multivitamins, probiotics, peptides, and collagen.

Here's the hook: Chances are, at least one supplement sitting in your cabinet right now is doing you little good, or may even be working against you.

The Pathway I Use with Clients

When I work with people one-on-one, I use a simple **pathway** to guide their supplement choices. You can use the same steps:

1. **Ask: Does my body already make this?**

- If **yes**, the first step is to support your body's "factory" with the right food, sleep, and nutrients. Case in point: your body makes glutathione, but only if it has enough protein, B vitamins, selenium, magnesium, and omega-3s.
- If **no**, ask: *"How do I know I don't already have enough?"* Testing or clear signs of deficiency are needed before you buy.

2. **Test instead of guessing.**

I use simple at-home tests with clients: dried blood spot (DBS) tests for both Vitamin D3 and omega-3s, as well as the ratio of omega-6 to omega-3. These tests are validated methods that take the guesswork out of supplementation (Harris et al., 2013; McNaughton et al., 2022).

3. **Check the root cause.**

Ask: *Is this supplement fixing the real problem, or just covering a symptom?* Many issues are rooted in poor diet, low omega-3s, low fiber, stress, or stiff cell membranes that block nutrients from working (Guo et al., 2017).

4. **Look at safety and quality.**

Form, dose, and timing matter. Natural vs. synthetic matters (Stein & Geisel, 2020). And after 6–8 weeks, re-check to make sure it's working.

5. **Food first. Supplements second.**

Supplements should never replace a balanced diet and lifestyle. Build the foundation first, then add only what's proven necessary.

Five Client Stories That Teach Big Lessons

1. Glutathione – The “Master Antioxidant”

A client once asked me about glutathione. She had read that it's “the master antioxidant” and wanted to buy the most expensive brand.

Here's what she didn't realize: your body already makes glutathione from protein, B vitamins, selenium, magnesium, and omega-3s. But if you don't give your body the right building blocks, production slows down (Wu et al., 2004).

Most glutathione pills break down before reaching your cells. And even if some does get through, stiff cell membranes, caused by too much omega-6 fat and too little omega-3 fat, block it from working (Guo et al., 2017).

It's like pouring water into a bucket full of holes.

Smarter Fix: Support your body's own glutathione factory with the right nutrients and keep cell membranes fluid so it can do its job.

My Recommendation: I would never supplement with glutathione. Instead, I help clients maximize their body's natural production through food variety, testing omega-6 to omega-3 ratios, and restoring balance with the supplement, **BalanceOil+**, a blend of wild-caught fish omega-3s and polyphenols from unripe olives. This improves absorption, protects the omega-3s, and allows glutathione to work as nature intended. And because we test, you can confirm after four months, the lifespan of a red blood cell, if it's working.

If you'd like to learn more about at-home testing or the BalanceOil+ I recommend, email me at robert@dietfreelife.com or [click here to schedule a free consultation](#).

2. Multivitamins – The “Safety Net”

Another client told me proudly, *“I don't worry about my diet because I take a multivitamin every day.”*

Here's what she didn't realize: most multivitamins contain **synthetic forms** of vitamins that don't act like nutrients from food. Some build up in the body and may even cause harm (Stein & Geisel, 2020).

When we tested, we found she was only low in vitamin D and B12. Instead of a “cover everything” pill, she needed **targeted support** and a more balanced diet.

It’s like buying a cheap phone charger. It looks real, but it overheats and damages your phone.

Smarter Fix: Food first. If testing shows you’re low, supplement only with what you truly need.

My Recommendation: I rarely recommend a multivitamin. The idea that “it’s better to be safe than sorry” is more hype than science. Most blood tests are only snapshots, and diet directly affects them. That’s why in my coaching, we use dried blood spot testing for vitamin D3, omega-3s, and cell membrane fluidity, to name a few, to confirm real needs and then add only what the body is missing.

If you’d like to learn more about testing for vitamin D3, omega-3s, and cell membrane fluidity, email me at robert@dietfreelife.com or [click here to schedule a free consultation](#).

3. Probiotics – The “Good Bacteria”

One client came in frustrated because she had tried four different probiotic brands, but her bloating never improved.

Here’s what she didn’t realize: we already have probiotics, live bacteria, living inside us right now. But for them to survive and thrive, they need **dietary fiber and prebiotics**. Our natural bacteria do not depend on probiotic supplements. In fact, multiple studies show most probiotics just pass through without meaningful benefits (Bischoff, 2011; Ianaro et al., 2016).

What really matters is **feeding the good bacteria you already have**. Without the right fuel, they can’t grow or do their job, just like seeds can’t grow in dry, depleted soil.

Probiotic supplements are like planting flowers in dry soil. They may sprout, but they won’t thrive.

Smarter Fix: Feed your gut with dietary fiber and prebiotics from plant-based whole foods. If supplementing, prioritize prebiotics, not probiotics. Research shows probiotics have little lasting impact, while prebiotics fuel your bacteria to produce **short-chain fatty acids** that reduce inflammation and improve gut health.

My Recommendation: Over 90% of people in the U.S. and Canada don’t get enough dietary fiber. That’s why I recommend **ZinoBiotic+**, a clinically designed dietary fiber and prebiotic supplement that feeds your microbiome the way nature intended.

If you’d like to learn more about improving gut health through diet, prebiotics, or the products I recommend, email me at robert@dietfreelife.com or [click here to schedule a free consultation](#).

4. Peptides – The “Quick Fix” Trend

A younger client came to me excited about peptides. She had seen ads online promising fat loss, muscle gain, and glowing skin.

Here's what she didn't realize: peptides aren't new. They've been studied for decades, and some have legitimate medical uses when prescribed in very specific forms, like insulin, which is technically a peptide hormone that works on a cellular level.

But the peptides being sold today in powders, sprays, or MLM-style supplements are different. They're marketed with bold promises about improving **metabolism, appetite, recovery, and energy**. Here's the truth: there are **no peer-reviewed studies** proving these products do what they claim. And that is your clarity: without scientific validation, the promises are marketing, not medicine (Reznik & Frishman, 2020).

Buying these peptide supplement products expecting dramatic weight loss, younger skin, or boundless energy is like pushing random buttons on your car's dashboard, you might hit the gas when you really need the brakes.

We'll talk about **hydrolyzed collagen peptides** in the next section, since that's one of the most common types being sold today. But the bigger lesson is this: shortcuts that skip the basics almost always disappoint.

Smarter Fix: Build strong foundations first, nutrition, sleep, stress balance, and omega-3 levels. Peptides may have a role in medicine, but in the supplement world, they're more hype than help.

My Recommendation: I don't recommend peptides as a first step. In my coaching, we start with testing, restoring omega-6 to omega-3 balance with **BalanceOil+**, improving sleep, and managing stress. These changes often deliver the results people hope peptides will provide, naturally, safely, and without the hype.

If you'd like to learn more about how to get real results without risky peptide supplements, email me at robert@dietfreelife.com or [click here to schedule a free consultation](#).

5. Hydrolyzed Collagen – The “Beauty Supplement”

A client once told me she was spending nearly \$200 a month on collagen powders for her skin, but she wasn't seeing the results she expected.

Here's the more accurate picture: when you take hydrolyzed collagen, your body breaks it down into amino acids and small peptides. Most of those amino acids enter the body's general pool and can be used anywhere, in muscles, bones, organs, or skin. A smaller fraction may survive digestion and act as **signals** to collagen-producing cells, which may explain why some studies show modest improvements in skin elasticity and joint health (Nobile et al., 2016; Pu et al., 2023; Kim et al., 2018).

But collagen is still an **incomplete protein**, lacking essential amino acids like tryptophan, which means it's not ideal for general protein synthesis.

Taking collagen without the right foundation is like giving your house a pile of lumber, you may want a new porch, but the house might use it to patch the roof instead.

Smarter Fix: Support collagen naturally with protein-rich whole foods, vitamin C, omega-3s, and lifestyle habits like protecting your skin from too much sun. Collagen powders can help, but only when the basics are in place, and only if they're formulated correctly.

✅ **My Recommendation:** I don't start clients on collagen supplements. First, I make sure they're getting enough protein and vitamin C from food, while also balancing omega-6 to omega-3 with **BalanceOil+**. This lays the foundation for healthy collagen production. If we add a collagen supplement, it must include **essential cofactors like vitamin C, zinc, and copper** (Paul et al., 2019; McRae, 2017) and have the correct molecular weight (Dalton) for absorption (Alcock et al., 2024). That's why I recommend **Liquid Collagen BOOZT**, which is designed with these co-factors and optimized peptide size so the body can use it. The only other collagen supplement I would recommend is **Liquid Biocell Collagen**, as it also contains the essential cofactors and correct molecular weight needed for effectiveness.

👉 If you'd like to learn more about collagen supplementation or the products I recommend, email me at robert@dietfreelife.com or [click here to schedule a free consultation](#).

3 Quick Questions Before Buying Any Supplement

Before you spend money on another bottle, ask yourself:

1. **Does my body already make this?**
2. **How do I know I need this?**
3. **Is it fixing the root cause, or just covering a symptom?**

If you can't answer these confidently, pause. Test. And get guidance before adding another supplement. If you'd like to learn more about the at-home test or the products I recommend, email me at robert@dietfreelife.com or [click here to schedule a free consultation](#).

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Robert Ferguson is a California- and Florida-based single father of two daughters, clinical nutritionist, researcher, best-selling author, speaker, podcast and television host, health advisor, NAACP Image Award Nominee, creator of the Diet Free Life methodology, and Chief Nutrition Officer for iCoura Health. He also serves on the Presidential Task Force on Obesity for the National Medical Association and the Health and Product Advisory Board for Zinzino, Inc.