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This report looks at the following areas:

- The impact of COVID-19 on the vitamins and supplements category
- Particular functional benefits that people are seeking from VMS
- Barriers to vitamins and supplements
- Factors prompting people to start taking VMS
- People's shopping behaviours when buying VMS and the influence of price promotions
- Trends in launch activity and opportunities for further innovation

Vitamins and supplements with organic ingredients are seen as better for people's health than non-organic ones by 61% of users/buyers. Despite the consumer interest, organic claims are underexplored in VMS, featuring on just 9% of NPD in 2020. Innovation in this area would also be timely, given the media focus on the link between environmental damage and global pandemics.

The COVID-19 outbreak boosted sales of VMS in 2020 by heightening consumers' focus on health. However, sales started to decline over Spring/ Summer 2021 as fears around the virus subsided. The expected permanent shift towards more home-working will also impede sales growth by enabling people in full-time employment, who are key VMS users, to cook from scratch more often and thus get important nutrients from their diet.

The ageing population of the UK and falling birth rates will support sales of some VMS types, particularly those supporting joint/bone health while eroding sales of others such as energy-boosting products, pregnancy and children's supplements.

Persuading existing users to recommend their products to others is an effective means for VMS brands to expand their user groups. Friend/family recommendation is the leading cause for people to start taking VMS, cited by 31% of users, surpassing even advice from medical professionals in this regard.



"Having grown strongly in 2020, sales of VMS have declined in 2021 due to consumers' lessening health anxiety. Opportunity for growth lies in brands pushing a 'prevention rather than cure' approach in order to drive value sales in the long term." - Alice Baker, Senior

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Table of Contents

OVERVIEW

- Key issues covered in this Report
- COVID-19: market context
- Economic and other assumptions
- Products covered in this Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Impact of COVID-19 on vitamins and supplements
 Figure 1: Short, medium and long-term impact of COVID-19 on vitamins and supplements, 2021
- The market
- Pandemic boosts sales in 2020, but demand falls over 2021
- Sales to decline over 2022-26, but remain up compared with pre-pandemic

Figure 2: Market size and COVID-19 scenario forecast for retail value sales of vitamins and supplements, 2016-26.

- Growth in immune supplements runs out of steam in 2021
- Stronger sales growth for supermarkets than specialist chemists in 2020
- Online sees the fastest rate of sales growth over 2019-21
- Demographic shifts exert divergent effects on the category
- Companies and brands
- Vitabiotics brands surge forward over 2020-21
 Figure 3: Leading brands' sales in the UK vitamins and supplements market, 2019/20-2020/21
- · Immune health is the leading functional health claim
- Ethical and vegan claims rise over 2018-20
- Brands take a holistic approach in their 2020-21 advertising
- Brand loyalty is low in VMS

Figure 4: Attitudes towards and usage of selected brands, 2021

- The consumer
- Pandemic boosts usage of VMS, especially Vitamin D
 Figure 5: Usage frequency for vitamins and supplements
- Immune and gut health are among leading reasons for taking VMS

Figure 6: Reasons for taking vitamins and supplements, 2021

 Need to persuade consumers of supplements' usefulness and efficacy

Figure 7: Barriers for vitamins and supplements, 2021

Encourage users to spread the word to drive buying

What's included

Executive Summary

Full Report PDF

Infographic Overview

Powerpoint Presentation

Interactive Databook

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Figure 8: Prompts to start taking vitamins and supplements, 2021

Organic VMS warrant further exploration

Figure 9: Behaviours relating to vitamins and supplements, 2021

ISSUES AND INSIGHTS

- Build consumer engagement to grow sales post-pandemic
- · Find ways to harness the power of recommendations
- Organic VMS warrant further exploration

THE MARKET - KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Pandemic boosts sales in 2020, but demand falls over 2021
- Sales to decline over 2022-26, but remain up compared with pre-pandemic
- Growth in immune supplements runs out of steam in 2021
- Stronger sales growth for supermarkets than specialist chemists in 2020
- Online sees the fastest rate of sales growth over 2019-21
- Demographic shifts exert divergent effects on the category

MARKET SIZE AND PERFORMANCE

- Pandemic boosts sales of vitamins and supplements
 Figure 10: Short, medium and long-term impact of COVID-19 on vitamins and supplements, 2021
- Strong growth in 2020 boosts the category's overall growth rate

Figure 11: Retail market size for vitamins and supplements, 2016-21

 Consumers' improved confidence sees sales start to fall back over 2021

MARKET FORECAST

- Sales of VMS to slide but remain above pre-pandemic levels over 2021-26
- Consumers' renewed health focus should continue to support sales
- Permanent shift towards home-working increases competition from the food category
- Ageing UK population to both help and hinder sales
 Figure 12: Market forecast for retail value sales of vitamins and supplements, 2021–26
- Market drivers and assumptions

What's included

Executive Summary

Full Report PDF

Infographic Overview

Powerpoint Presentation

Interactive Databook

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Figure 13: Key drivers affecting Mintel's market forecast, 2015–25

Forecast methodology

COVID-19 SCENARIO PERFORMANCE

- Mintel's approach to predicting the impact of COVID-19
- Fundamental differences in how COVID-19 is affecting consumer markets
- VMS category to perform better in the event of extended disruption than with rapid recovery

Figure 14: COVID-19 scenario forecasts, 2016-26

COVID-19 market disruption: risks and outcomes

Figure 15: Summary of Mintel scenario expectations and the impact on the vitamins and supplements market, 2021

MARKET SEGMENTATION

- Children's supplements continue to lead sales
 Figure 16: Retail value sales of vitamins and supplements, by demographic and function, 2019–21
- Decline in the child population poses a problem for the category
- Ageing population benefits certain supplements
- Growth in immune support supplements loses steam over 2020-21

CHANNELS TO MARKET

 Chemists remain the leading outlet for buying VMS, but face strong competition from supermarkets

Figure 17: UK retail value sales of vitamins and supplements, by outlet type, 2019–21

- Sales growth for supermarkets outpaces specialist chemists in 2020
- Online sees the strongest growth in 2020

MARKET DRIVERS

- Changes in population demographics offer challenges and opportunities
- Ageing UK population is better news for some supplement types than others

Figure 18: Trends in the age structure of the UK population, 2015-25

 Declining birth rates reduce demand for pregnancy supplements

Figure 19: Live births in England and Wales, 2016-20

What's included

Executive Summary

Full Report PDF

Infographic Overview

Powerpoint Presentation

Interactive Databook

Previous editions

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- Decline in under-10s poses a problem, but scope for expansion in products targeting teenagers
- Consumers' improved financial confidence is good news for the VMS category

Figure 20: Consumers' confidence in their finances for the coming year, those saying they are pretty confident they will be ok, 2020-21

- Companies are under pressure to keep products on promotion
- Meat reduction trend offers opportunities

COMPANIES AND BRANDS - KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Vitabiotics brands surge forward over 2020-21
- · Immune health is the leading functional health claim
- Ethical and vegan claims rise over 2018-20
- Brands take a holistic approach in their 2020-21 advertising
- Brand loyalty is low in the VMS category

MARKET SHARE

Vitabiotics brands surge forward over 2020-21
 Figure 21: Leading brands' sales and share in the UK vitamins and supplements market, by value, 2018/19-2020/21

LAUNCH ACTIVITY AND INNOVATION

- Immune health is the leading functional health claim
 Figure 22: New product launches in the UK vitamins and
 supplements market, by functional health claims, 2017–21
 (sorted by 2020)
- Vitamin D supplements look to strengthen associations with sunshine

Figure 23: New product launches in the UK vitamins and supplements market, by top seven vitamin/mineral types, 2018, 21

Figure 24: Examples of Vitamin D supplements launches referencing sunshine on-pack, 2021

 Babies' VMS launches look to explain the need for such products

Figure 25: Examples of immune-supporting VMS aimed at babies, 2021

 Energy-related functional claims feature on 28% of VMS launches in 2020

Figure 26: Lifebio High Dose Vitamins D&B Boost & Protect Patch, 2021

What's included

Executive Summary

Full Report PDF

Infographic Overview

Powerpoint Presentation

Interactive Databook

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Holland & amp; Barrett unveils energy supplement designed for gamers

- Health & amp; Her's new perimenopause supplements come with their own app
- Daylesford extends into VMS
 Figure 27: Example of Daylesford's new supplements range,
 2021
- Tablets are the most widespread VMS format in 2020
 Figure 28: New product launches in the UK vitamins and supplements market, by format, 2018–21
- Capsules take the lead in 2021
 Figure 29: Seven Seas relaunches its cod liver oil range with a 'new and improved' recipe, 2021
- Increased NPD activity in liquid formats in 2021
 Figure 30: Examples of VMS product launches in liquid formats, 2021
- Ethical claims gain momentum
 Figure 31: Share of new product launches in the UK vitamins and supplements market with ethical and environmental claims, 2017–21
- Environmentally-friendly packaging is the most widespread ethical claim
 - Figure 32: New product launches in the UK vitamins and supplements market, by ethical claims, 2017-21 (sorted by 2020)
- Smaller brands supplement packaging claims with other environmental claims
 - Figure 33: Examples of VMS product launches combining environmentally-friendly packaging with other environmental claims, 2021
- Children's supplement focuses on emotions as well as brain development
 - Figure 34: Parkacre SpongeBob Squarepants Orange & Pineapple Flavoured Brain Fomrula Chewables, 2021
- Private label offers serious competition to brands in VMS
 Figure 35: New product launches in the UK vitamins and supplements market, by private label and brands, 2018-21
- Own-label VMS launches draw on trends in the food and drink category

Figure 36: Examples of own-label VMS product launches featuring trendy ingredients, 2021

Boots launches supplements tailored to vegan lifestyles

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Previous editions

Executive Summary

Full Report PDF

Infographic Overview

Powerpoint Presentation

Interactive Databook

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Figure 37: Example of Boots supplements range tailored to vegan lifestyles, 2020

- Vegan claims rapidly gain importance over 2018-20
 Figure 38: Share of new product launches in the UK vitamins and supplements market with vegan claims, 2018-21
 - Figure 39: Examples of VMS launches with vegan and sustainable packaging claims, 2020-21
- VMS products with CBD emphasise their natural credentials
 Figure 40: Examples of VMS product launches with CBD, 2021
- Serving suggestions are used to build more of a lifestyle positioning

Figure 41: Examples of CBD-based VMS product launches with on-pack serving suggestions, 2021

ADVERTISING AND MARKETING ACTIVITY

- Recorded advertising spend falls in 2020
 Figure 42: Total above-the-line, online display and direct
 - mail advertising expenditure on vitamins and supplements, by top ten advertisers, 2019-21
- Vitabiotics continues to lead on advertising spend
- Social media campaigns focus on emotional wellbeing
 Figure 43: Facebook post promoting the link-up between
 Vitabiotics and Emma's Diary
- Healthspan ups advertising spend in 2020
- Healthspan explores various aspects of a healthy lifestyle, including healthy eating and at-home exercise
- TV advert for Centrum highlights immune health benefits
- · Nourished emphasises personalisation in new TV advert
- Nielsen Ad Intel coverage

BRAND RESEARCH

Brand map

Figure 44: Attitudes towards and usage of selected brands, 2021

Key brand metrics

Figure 45: Key metrics for selected brands, 2021

 Brand attitudes: Seven Seas and Centrum are the most widely seen as consistently high quality

Figure 46: Attitudes, by brand, 2021

- Brand personality: Bassetts scores highest on the fun factor Figure 47: Brand personality Macro image, 2021
- Seven Seas has the strongest natural image
 Figure 48: Brand personality Micro image, 2021

What's included

Executive Summary

Full Report PDF

Infographic Overview

Powerpoint Presentation

Interactive Databook

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- Brand analysis
- Wellkid/man/teen/woman enjoys high user satisfaction despite lower usage than some other brands

Figure 49: User profile of Wellkid/man/teen/woman, 2021

 Vitabiotics has relatively low usage but enjoys a strong positive image among users

Figure 50: User profile of Vitabiotics, 2021

 Under-24s are more likely than older people to see Berocca as effective

Figure 51: User profile of Berocca, 2021

Seven Seas is the most trusted brand

Figure 52: User profile of Seven Seas, 2021

 Centrum has something of an image for quality and expertise

Figure 53: User profile of Centrum, 2021

• Bassetts scores highest on the fun factor Figure 54: User profile of Bassetts, 2021

Reading word clouds

THE CONSUMER - KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Pandemic boosts usage of VMS, especially Vitamin D
- Immune and gut health are among leading reasons for taking VMS
- Need to persuade consumers of supplements' usefulness and efficacy
- Companies must ensure that users spread the word in order to drive buying
- Organic VMS warrant further exploration

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

- Consumers' renewed health focus could both help and hinder the category
- COVID-19 outbreak boosts sales of VMS in 2020, but sales are set to fall back in 2021
- Consumers' healthy eating resolutions increase the competition from the food category
- Scratch cooking trend poses a threat to the category
- Pandemic causes more people to buy direct from manufacturers
- Consumers' strengthened environmental focus makes it imperative for companies to be seen as proactive on sustainability

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 Increased interest in veganism provides opportunities for specialised supplements

USAGE OF VITAMINS AND SUPPLEMENTS

 Pandemic boosts vitamins and supplements usage
 Figure 55: Usage of vitamins and supplements, 2020 and 2021

- Adults aged 25-44 and parents of under-16s are the key
- · ...but not always the most diligent ones
- Employment rates are important for VMS
- Pandemic also boosts daily usage of VMS
 Figure 56: Usage frequency for vitamins and supplements
- Over-45s are the most frequent users
- · Consumers' financial health is important for the category
- A quarter of people take VMS only occasionally
 Figure 57: Facebook post by Vitabiotics, June 2021

USAGE OF VITAMINS AND SUPPLEMENTS BY TYPE

 Multivitamins remain the most widely taken vitamin product type

Figure 58: Types of vitamins taken, 2019-21

- Further growth in Vitamin D usage
- Vitamin D is 'missing' some potential users
- Some people 'top up' multivitamins with single-vitamin supplements

Figure 59: Repertoire of types of vitamins taken, 2021

 Cod liver/fish oil remains the most widely used non-vitamin supplement

Figure 60: Usage of minerals and dietary supplements, 2019-21

 Affluent people have wider repertoires of minerals and dietary supplements

Figure 61: Repertoire of types of minerals/dietary supplements taken, 2021

REASONS FOR TAKING VITAMINS AND SUPPLEMENTS

- Immune health is the top reason for taking VMS
 Figure 62: Reasons for taking vitamins and supplements, 2021
- Over-55s are the most likely to take VMS to benefit bone and joint health
- Under-35s and students are the most likely to take VMS to boost their energy levels

What's included

Executive Summary

Full Report PDF

Infographic Overview

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- Target working adults of all ages in marketing to broaden the appeal of energy supplements
- · Vitamin C is 'missing' potential users
- Many people take VMS for both energy and immune benefits
- A quarter of users take VMS to support digestive health

BARRIERS FOR VITAMINS AND SUPPLEMENTS

- Encourage a 'prevention rather than cure' approach to drive sales
 - Figure 63: Barriers for vitamins and supplements, 2021
- Draw on scientific studies to add weight to health claims and build trust
- Endorsements from medical associations should help to drive trial

PROMPTS TO START TAKING VITAMINS AND SUPPLEMENTS

Find ways to harness the power of recommendations
 Figure 64: Prompts to start taking vitamins and supplements,
 2021

LOCATIONS FOR BUYING VITAMINS AND SUPPLEMENTS

 Pandemic drives growth in online buying of vitamins and supplements

Figure 65: Locations for buying vitamins and supplements, 2020 and 2021

BEHAVIOURS RELATING TO VITAMINS AND SUPPLEMENTS

- Scope for expansion in organic VMS
 Figure 66: Behaviours relating to vitamins and supplements,
 2021
- Use sustainable packaging and make ethical credentials more tangible to drive sales of organic VMS

Figure 67: International examples of organic VMS launches with on-pack details of their ethical policies, 2021

Need to explain the advantages of non-tablet formats

APPENDIX – DATA SOURCES, ABBREVIATIONS AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- Abbreviations
- Consumer research methodology

APPENDIX: CENTRAL FORECAST METHODOLOGY

Market forecast and prediction intervals

What's included

Executive Summary

Full Report PDF

Infographic Overview

Powerpoint Presentation

Interactive Databook

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Figure 68: Market size, forecast and prediction intervals for retail value sales of vitamins and supplements, 2016-26

Market drivers and assumptions
 Figure 69: Key drivers affecting Mintel's market forecast,
 2021-26

Forecast methodology

APPENDIX: COVID SCENARIO PERFORMANCE METHODOLOGY AND ASSUMPTIONS

• Scenario performance

Figure 70: Scenario performance for retail value sales of vitamins and supplements, 2016-26

- Rapid COVID recovery, central and extended COVID disruption scenarios outline
- Scenario methodology

APPENDIX - MARKET SHARE

Figure 71: Leading brand owners' sales and share in the UK vitamins and supplements market, by value, 2018/19-2020/21

What's included

Executive Summary

Full Report PDF

Infographic Overview

Powerpoint Presentation

Interactive Databook

Previous editions

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