



**WHAT'S THE FUSS ABOUT FLINTSTONES?**  
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THE BYPASSED LIFE

Flintstones are a hot topic in the bariatric community. Some people take them, and some people speak out loudly against them. So, why should you avoid them?

For post-op bariatric patients, nutritional supplementation is crucial. In 2008, the American Society of Metabolic and Bariatric Surgeons published nutritional guidelines for bariatric patients that specifically addressed multivitamin supplementation. According to the ASMBS, surgical weight loss patients should select “a high-potency vitamin containing 100% of daily value for at least 2/3 of nutrients.” Patients with a malabsorptive surgery, such as the Roux-en-Y gastric bypass (RNY) or the duodenal switch (DS), should take twice the adult dose to achieve 200% of the daily value of most nutrients. The ASMBS also recommends that patients “choose a complete formula with at least 18 mg iron, 400 mg folic acid, and containing selenium in each serving.” Their next recommendation is important: “Avoid children’s formulas that are incomplete.”

So, how do we evaluate whether a children’s formula is incomplete? Well, the best way is to use the previous ASMBS guidelines. Let’s look at the nutritional information for Flintstone’s Complete and see how they compare to the ASMBS guidelines. Flintstones actually contain a relatively short list of nutrients, and they are notably lacking in selenium, which the ASMBS says that bariatric patients should be sure to get from each multivitamin dose. Flintstones don’t contain this crucial mineral. It’s as simple as that.

Flintstones are especially lacking when compared to multivitamins formulated for bariatric patients:

	<b>Flintstones</b> 2 tablets	<b>Bariatric Advantage</b> 2 tablets
<b>Vitamin A</b>	6000 IU (33% as beta-carotene)	7,500 IU
<b>Vitamin C</b>	120 mg	120 mg
<b>Vitamin D</b>	800 IU	1000 IU (as D3)
<b>Vitamin E</b>	60 IU	30 IU
<b>Thiamin</b>	3 mg	6 mg
<b>Riboflavin</b>	3.4 mg	3.4 mg
<b>Niacin</b>	30 mg	50 mg
<b>Vitamin B6</b>	4 mg	4 mg
<b>Folic Acid</b>	800 mcg	800 mcg
<b>Vitamin B12</b>	12 mcg	100 mcg
<b>Biotin</b>	80 mcg	600 mcg
<b>Pantothenic Acid</b>	20 mc	20 mg
<b>Calcium</b>	200 mg (as calcium phosphate)	200 mg (as calcium citrate)
<b>Iron</b>	36 mg (as ferrous fumarate)	0 mg
<b>Phosphorous</b>	200 mg	0 mg
<b>Magnesium</b>	40 mg	50 mg
<b>Zinc</b>	24 mg (as zinc oxide)	22.5 mg (as zinc citrate)
<b>Copper</b>	4 mg	1.5 mg
<b>Sodium</b>	20 mg	0 mg

<b>Choline</b>	76 mg	3 mg
<b>Selenium</b>	0 mcg	201 mcg
<b>Manganese</b>	0 mg	2 mg
<b>Chromium</b>	0 mcg	150 mcg
<b>Molybdenum</b>	0 mcg	111 mcg
<b>Potassium</b>	0 mg	9 mg
<b>Flavonoids</b>	0	18.6
<b>Inositol</b>	0 mg	7.5 mg
<b>Vanadium</b>	0 mcg	37.5 mcg

A simple side-by-side comparison between Flintstones and a leading bariatric supplement, Bariatric Advantage shows that Bariatric Advantage includes a more extensive array of minerals than Flintstones. However, there is more to the story than simply the quantity of the nutrients included. There is also the quality of the nutrients and the ingredients chosen for inclusion.

For example, you might see that Flintstones include iron while Bariatric Advantage do not and think that this is a point in favor of Flintstones. However, the type of iron included in Flintstones is a type known as ferrous fumarate. Ferrous fumarate, as well as the other ferrous salts, such as ferrous sulfate, requires a high concentration of stomach acid to be converted to their absorbable form for absorption. In patients with a low concentration of stomach acid (e.g., most bariatric patients), this conversion doesn't take place, and the iron is not absorbed. Put simply, the iron in Flintstones is useless for most bariatric patients. Moreover, by choosing a multivitamin without iron, you are free to take it with calcium supplements.

Another example is the form of zinc used in both supplements. While Flintstones contain more zinc strictly by the numbers, they use an inferior form of zinc, zinc oxide, which does not absorb as well as the zinc used by Bariatric Advantage, zinc citrate. While you may be getting 1.5 mg more zinc with two Flintstones tablets, it is not as beneficial to you body as the zinc contained in the Bariatric Advantage multivitamin.

Bariatric patients with fat-malabsorptive procedures such as the Roux-en-Y gastric bypass or the duodenal switch need water-miscible, or "dry," forms of the fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E, and K. These are found in the Bariatric Advantage multivitamin, but not in Flintstones. Because fat-soluble vitamin deficiencies have been documented after both procedures, Flintstones are an especially poor choice following either of these procedures.

<b>Flintstones</b>	<b>Bariatric Advantage</b>
\$19.99 for a 200 count bottle	\$37.25 for a 180 count bottle
2 tablets a day = <b>\$0.20/day</b>	2 tablets a day = <b>\$0.41/day</b>

While Flintstones are less expensive than Bariatric Advantage, they are an inferior product. Both vitamins work out to less than fifty cents a day. Supplementation is a necessary cost of life after weight loss surgery, and must be considered prior to undergoing any procedure.

The bottom line is that Flintstones are formulated for kids, not for adult bodies recovering from bariatric surgery. They do not have the needs of adults with rearranged digestive tracts in mind. Do better for your body.