

# THINKING ABOUT SUPPLEMENTS WITH EDS? HERE'S WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW



If you're living with Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, you've probably asked yourself at some point: Should I be taking supplements? It's a fair question — when your body feels unpredictable, you're often willing to try anything that promises a little more stability or less pain.

From collagen powders to high-dose vitamins to influencer-backed protocols, there's a lot out there.

But with EDS, what helps someone else might not land the same way for you — and some products can even make things worse.

This guide breaks down what's actually helpful, what to skip, and how to make informed choices that support your body without adding stress, side effects, or wasted money.



## COLLAGEN SUPPLEMENTS: WHY THEY'RE (PROBABLY) NOT IT



This one comes up a lot. Since EDS affects collagen, it seems obvious that collagen supplements should help, right?

### What actually happens:

Your body breaks down ingested collagen into basic amino acids— just like it would with any other protein. It doesn't directly rebuild or replace the faulty collagen that's part of your genetic blueprint..

### Why they don't work for EDS:

EDS affects how your body produces or assembles collagen. Supplements can't override the genetic code that's already shaping that process.

**TL;DR:** Collagen supplements aren't dangerous, but they don't fix the root issue in EDS. You're likely better off spending your energy (and money) elsewhere.

# SUPPLEMENTS TO USE WITH CAUTION

Not all supplements are bad—but some require a little more thought before you add them to your routine. Here's what you should know:



## Vitamin D

Low vitamin D is super common in EDS and can contribute to fatigue, bone pain, and immune dysfunction.

But too much can cause side effects like kidney stones, mood changes, and calcium buildup where you don't want it.

**Tip:** Ask your provider to check your 25-OH vitamin D levels before supplementing. More isn't always better.

## Magnesium

Magnesium is often helpful for muscle cramps, sleep issues, and constipation—aka the EDS symptom trifecta.

But not all forms are created equal. Magnesium oxide? Basically a laxative. Others like glycinate or citrate are gentler.

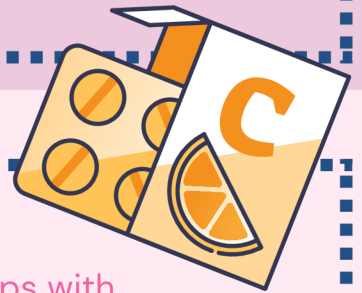
**Tip:** Start low, go slow, and pay attention to how your body responds. It's all about experimenting safely.



## Calcium

Calcium is important for bone density (a concern in EDS), but high doses—especially without balancing nutrients like magnesium and vitamin K2—can lead to arterial calcification or GI issues.

**Tip:** Only supplement if a provider recommends it based on your lab work and bone health. It's not a "just in case" vitamin.



## Vitamin C

Vitamin C helps with collagen formation and tissue repair, but its role in EDS isn't fully clear.

It's generally safe, though, and some folks report it helps with bruising or slow healing.

**Tip:** Stick to standard dosing unless your provider says otherwise (usually under 2,000 mg/day).



## WHAT TO AVOID (OR BE EXTRA CAREFUL WITH)

### St. John's Wort and Other Herbal Supplements

This herb can interact with a lot of meds, including SSRIs, SNRIs, pain meds, and blood thinners—common prescriptions in the EDS world.



### Sketchy Protocols and "Genetic Repair" Claims

If a supplement claims it can "rewire your DNA" or "fix your collagen," that's your cue to close the tab. These products are unregulated, untested, and usually designed to take advantage of people with chronic illness.



### Additives and Preservatives

If you also have MCAS or sensitive digestion (which is common in EDS), watch out for artificial sweeteners, food dyes, or fillers in supplement powders and gummies. These can be hidden triggers.



**Tip:** Always read the label, and when in doubt, bring the bottle to your next appointment. There's no shame in double-checking.

## LET'S TALK ABOUT RESTRICTIVE DIETS

We get it—when your symptoms are flaring and nothing's working, food can feel like the one thing you can control. But be cautious with diets that cut out whole food groups or promise "detox" results.

### Why it's risky with EDS:

- People with EDS often already struggle with GI issues, malabsorption, and nutrient depletion.
- Restrictive diets without supervision can seriously increase the risk of fatigue, slow healing, and even worsening pain or brain fog

### Common deficiencies in EDS:

- Vitamin D
- B12
- Magnesium
- Iron
- Folate



**Tip:** If you're thinking of going low-FODMAP, low-histamine, or gluten-free, work with a provider who gets EDS. A registered dietitian or GI doc familiar with connective tissue conditions can help you keep it balanced and sustainable.

## GOT POTS OR MCAS TOO? HERE'S WHAT CHANGES



It's super common for folks with EDS to also have POTS or MCAS, and these diagnoses come with their own nutrition needs.

- **POTS:** You may need more salt, fluids, and electrolytes to stay upright and avoid crashing. Some supplements (like magnesium or B vitamins) can affect your blood pressure or heart rate, so be cautious.
- **MCAS:** Low-histamine eating might help, but histamine is sneaky — supplements, flavorings, and preservatives can all sneak it in.

**Tip:** If you're flaring after a new supplement, check ingredients for citrus, fermented extracts, or added flavorings that may trigger a histamine response.



## SO WHAT CAN YOU DO?

You don't need to avoid all supplements — but you do want to be strategic and informed. Here's how to do that:

**Get lab work done first. Ask your provider to check:**

- Vitamin D (25-OH)
- B12
- Ferritin
- Magnesium (ideally RBC magnesium)
- Folate

**Track your symptoms.** Use a journal or notes app to log changes when you start something new—energy, digestion, mood, pain, etc.

**Food first.** Supplements can fill in the gaps, but they aren't a substitute for real nourishment, hydration, and rest.

**Build your care team.** Look for a provider or dietitian who understands EDS and co-occurring conditions. You deserve care that sees the whole picture.



## NOURISHMENT, NOT QUICK FIXES

When you're navigating life with EDS, it's easy to feel pressure to try every new powder, pill, or protocol that pops up in your feed. But the truth is, your body deserves more than a band-aid. Supplements can be helpful—but only when they're used in the right way, for the right reasons.

The real goal isn't to biohack your genes or find a one-size-fits-all cure. It's to support your system in ways that are safe, sustainable, and grounded in what you actually need. So start with what's real: your symptoms, your labs, your gut instinct. Trust your data.

Get curious—not desperate. And know that taking care of your body doesn't have to mean chasing every shiny new thing. Sometimes the best move is a slower, smarter one.