

# **Nutrition Job Interview Questions And Answers**



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## Nutrition Interview Questions And Answers Guide.

### Question - 1:

What is BSE and how can I prevent exposure to it?

#### Ans:

Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), also called "mad cow disease" is a fatal neurological disease in cows thought to be caused by consuming contaminated animal feed. Some countries have included in the feed given to cattle, ground up animal parts including brains and nervous systems of animals killed for food. Some of these animals had early stages BSE, and the infectious agent was passed on to the animals who consumed the feed. There is now evidence that some people who ate the meat from animals infected with BSE became infected themselves. Nearly 100 people have now died from what are now called "transmissible spongiform encephalopathies" (TSEs) believed to have been caused by eating BSE-contaminated beef.

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### Question - 2:

Where is the best source of bovine raw glandulars?

#### Ans:

Glandular materials start out as healthy (or unhealthy) as the animals from which they are made. For this reason, all reputable processors of glandular concentrates will use only USDA-inspected animals as the original source. The highest quality glandular materials will be made from animals grown in a healthier environment. New Zealand beef cattle make the best source of bovine glandular concentrates, because they are free-range rather than lot-raised, and fed pasture grasses and hay rather than cattle feed. Additionally, New Zealand is one of the only countries in the world considered completely free of BSE (mad cow disease) and other transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs).

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### Question - 3:

What does porcine mean?

#### Ans:

Porcine means derived from pig.

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### Question - 4:

What makes amino acid chelated minerals better than other types of minerals?

#### Ans:

In order to be absorbed, minerals, whether from foods or in supplements, have to be combined with a "carrier" molecule. When this molecule is a fragment of protein (an amino acid), and the mineral-amino acid compound forms a stable molecule, it is referred to as an amino acid chelate. Because the body is very efficient at absorbing amino acids, chelated minerals are more easily transported across the intestinal wall than are non-chelated minerals.

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### Question - 5:

What is the glycemic index?

#### Ans:

The glycemic index (GI) is a ranking of foods on a scale from 0 to 100 according to the extent to which they raise blood sugar levels after eating. Glucose is given a relative number of 100 to provide a baseline to which all others can be compared. For example, an apple has a glycemic index of 38 which is less than half that of glucose, but higher than soybeans (which have a glycemic index of 18). Other common foods and their corresponding glycemic indices are Corn Flakes (84), dark rye bread (80), and bananas (54).

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### Question - 6:

What is MSM?

#### Ans:

Methylsulfonylmethane (MSM) is a highly biologically valuable source of sulfur. Sulfur is important for joint tissue support, however, other nutrients are also



supportive of joint health. Along with MSM there are a number of supportive nutrients including glucosamine, chondroitin, vitamins C and E, and specific amino acids. While optimal joint support must start with a healthy and varied diet, nutritional supplements may be useful. However, it is important that your healthcare provider be aware of ALL supplements, herbs or medicines you are taking.

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### Question - 7:

What is myo-inositol, and how does it differ from regular inositol?

**Ans:**

Myo-inositol is one of eight naturally occurring forms that make up the nutrient inositol. Each one has a slightly different shape and are individually referred to as isomers. The myo-inositol isomer is the most abundant form found in the central nervous system, where it can be converted into phosphatidyl inositol, a second messenger neurotransmitters. Inositol is the term used to describe the entire group of isomers together.

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### Question - 8:

What are colloidal minerals?

**Ans:**

A "colloid" is a chemical description of a gel-like suspension. Therefore, colloidal minerals would be a blend of minerals found in some form of suspension or solution. Generally, commercially-available colloidal minerals are produced from mining ancient sea beds, and then mixing the mined minerals with water or other fluid to hold them in solution. While these products provide a large number of minerals, there is no credible scientific evidence to support marketing claims for superior absorption or bioavailability. They may even contain relatively high levels of unwanted minerals such as aluminum, lead or mercury (which of course are naturally occurring), or of other contaminants.

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### Question - 9:

I have heard that human strains of probiotics are the best. Is that true?

**Ans:**

Partly. While it is true that the most beneficial probiotics (friendly bacteria) can be isolated from humans' digestive tracts, certainly not all strains found there are healthful. In the womb, the baby's digestive tract is virtually sterile; the bacteria that will grow there following birth are due to exposure from the mother in the birth canal or at the breast during breast-feeding. Historically, our diet has contained additional sources of probiotics, including yogurt, buttermilk, fermented cheeses and even sauerkraut. So-called "human strains" of probiotics did not originate in humans therefore, but came originally from consuming them as part of a healthy diet. There are hundreds of different strains of bacteria living in the colon of a healthy person. Some of them confer benefits to humans, others are potentially harmful, and some can be either. A better question would be to determine the potential the specific strains of bacteria in question have for providing reliable and consistent health benefits.

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### Question - 10:

I have heard calcium can interfere with prescription drugs?

**Ans:**

Certain drugs and nutrients may interact and in effect, reduce the strength of the drug. For this reason it is important to always discuss with your healthcare provider all the different vitamins, minerals, herbs and especially drugs you are taking.

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### Question - 11:

What vitamins, minerals or herbs might be recommended for anxiety?

**Ans:**

Many nutrients have been shown to be helpful during times of anxiety, both to help you cope with anxiety and also to offset the increased nutritional demands on your body due to stress. The first place to begin is to make sure your diet has plenty of vegetables and fruit, preferably fresh. (These provide high nutritional value with low calories.) Beyond that, herbs such as St. John's Wort have been shown in scientific research to be helpful, but before you take any herbs or vitamins for anxiety, be sure and discuss them with your healthcare provider.

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### Question - 12:

Should an infant take Acidophilus? I have heard they should only take Bifidus?

**Ans:**

While it is true that bifidobacterium lactis is commonly found in the digestive tract of healthy infants, remember that there are hundreds of different bacteria strains in a healthy digestive tract. Different strains such as Lactobacillus acidophilus may provide specific and desired health benefits and could be part of your healthcare provider's strategy. Be sure and discuss this with your nutritionally-oriented health care practitioner.

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### Question - 13:

When should a child take vitamins?

**Ans:**

Both children and adults should always strive to eat a healthy diet, full of various different naturally colorful vegetables and fruits (it is the substances that give color to our food that often contain the greatest value!) A nutritional supplement should be taken to improve the overall value of the diet, not to replace the necessity of healthy dietary choices. But because in our hectic lifestyle many people cannot, or do not make the healthiest choices, a basic nutritional supplement targeted towards children's increased nutritional needs makes good nutritional "insurance."



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**Question - 14:**

What if I find a tablet in my stool?

**Ans:**

That means that the tablet did not break down during the digestive process, and the nutrients in the tablet were not absorbed. A well-manufactured tablet should break down within 20 or 30 minutes after you swallow it. Reputable companies routinely perform disintegration tests on tablets during manufacturing to ensure they meet appropriate standards.

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**Question - 15:**

Will I destroy any of the properties in a tablet if I crush it?

**Ans:**

Generally, no. Sometimes crushing a tablet and sprinkling the powder on apple sauce or some other food helps those who have difficulty swallowing tablets. The only exception to this is if the supplement is enteric coated to allow it remain intact in the stomach and break down in the small intestine. Crushing the tablet may reduce the amount of the nutrient that gets into the bloodstream, so if you have any questions about this please be sure and discuss them with your healthcare provider on your next visit.

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**Question - 16:**

Should I take extra antioxidants if I am working out?

**Ans:**

Exercise increases the flow of blood to the muscles, to deliver more oxygen and other nutrients. As oxygen usage increases, so does the production of free radicals. Since antioxidants help protect against the damage caused by free radicals, it would be sensible to increase your body's supply of antioxidants. The important first step in doing so is to eat a diet rich in fresh vegetables and fruits, since that is where many of the antioxidants are found in the first place. A good, broad-based nutritional supplement may be helpful in filling in any gaps in your diet, but should never be used instead of eating a healthy diet. Remember to always discuss your nutritional supplement use with your healthcare provider.

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**Question - 17:**

Can I still take vitamins if I am involved with a detoxification program?

**Ans:**

Detoxification is a complex, energy-demanding process. The hundreds of different enzymes and biochemical pathways involved in detoxification require the presence of specific vitamins and minerals in order to function optimally. Additionally, research has shown that the process of detoxification can be compromised by insufficient energy reserves in the form of readily available calories. It is important to discuss your specific nutrition requirements with your healthcare provider, especially during detoxification programs.

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**Question - 18:**

Can I still take vitamins if I have a cold or flu?

**Ans:**

While preventing illness is where nutritional supplements and herbs have been shown to have their best effects, it is certainly helpful to continue on your supplement program when sick; in fact, the added stresses of fighting an infection significantly increase your body's nutritional requirements. Continue taking your supplements until advised to stop or change dosages by your healthcare provider.

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**Question - 19:**

What makes urine change color when I take a multivitamin?

**Ans:**

Vitamin B2 (riboflavin) causes urine to become a bright yellow when consumed in relatively high amounts.

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**Question - 20:**

Why would herbs be supplied in combination blends?

**Ans:**

Historically, the people who studied, catalogued and used herbs in treating people would use them in combinations. Traditional herbalists knew which combinations of herbs, when prepared in certain ways, would yield the results they were interested in. An herbalist would take several different plants, prepare them together as a tea, poultice, blend of dried powders, etc. and administer them. Drawing on this rich history of application improves can improve the successes of modern treatments as well.

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**Question - 21:**

Are herbs safe to take with prescription drugs?

**Ans:**



In general, herbs are very safe, but should not be taken with prescription drugs without the supervision of a healthcare provider. Recall that herbs have been used for supporting health for literally thousands of years. Remember, however, that herbs are complex compounds containing dozens of different chemicals. When combined with very powerful pharmaceutical drugs there is always the possibility of an effect other than what is desired. For this reason it is always important to discuss any combination of herbs, vitamins, and prescription drugs you are thinking of taking together with your healthcare provider.

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**Question - 22:**

Can I hurt myself by overdosing on vitamins?

**Ans:**

Everything has a range of safety, which also means that there is a potential (however small) that enough could be taken to become harmful. For example, even water and sunlight, which are essential for life, can become harmful if taken in extremely large quantities or for too long a time. In the case of most vitamins, the amounts used in supplements have been shown in repeated studies to be very safe. But because there is the possibility of taking "too much of a good thing," it is important to discuss with your healthcare provider ALL supplements (and the amounts of each) you are taking, so your specific health goals can be properly met.

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**Question - 23:**

How are herbs different from drugs?

**Ans:**

Drugs are made of a single, isolated compound that is generally patented, manufactured and "owned" by a company. Herbs are made from plants, and generally cannot be owned by a company, since their original source is in nature and is freely available. Generally, drugs have been extensively researched at great cost over a number of years (the need to recoup that cost is why governments allow drug companies to patent their drugs).

An additional and very important difference is in the way they work in the body. Generally, drugs have a specific mode of action; that means that they work on a specific chemical reaction in the body. They also tend to have side effects; the stronger the drug the more likely they are to have significant side effects. Herbs may also have certain side effects, but since their method of action is much more gentle, commonly the side effects (if any) tend to be very mild and resolve quickly.

When drugs and herbs are taken together, the effects of that combination may sometimes be difficult to predict. For that reason it is very important that you discuss any drugs, herbs or vitamins you are taken either singly or as combinations, with your healthcare provider.

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**Question - 24:**

Should I take the vitamins in the morning or at night?

**Ans:**

To date, no specific research has been that definitively answer that question, although arguments could be made to support taking supplements in the morning, at night, or even for other times (such as at mealtime, for instance). The most important step is to take them.

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**Question - 25:**

When should I stop taking the vitamins recommended by my healthcare provider?

**Ans:**

You should continue to take the supplements recommended by your healthcare provider until they instruct you to change dosage or stop taking them.

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**Question - 26:**

What are slow or time released tablets?

**Ans:**

Time-release or slow-release tablets are manufactured in such a way that they release their contents in the digestive tract over time rather than all at once. This can be accomplished by a variety of methods. One method is called "enteric coating," where the nutrient is coated with a substance that won't break down in the stomach but will in the small intestine. Another method coats the nutrients with a substance that will be slowly digested, so that the nutrients are gradually released. Both of these (and other) methods can be useful, but care must be exercised in the manufacturing process to ensure the desired results.

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**Question - 27:**

Why do vitamin supplements have expiration dates?

**Ans:**

As the tablets become exposed to sunlight, oxygen and moisture, vitamins may gradually lose potency. Although they do not become "toxic" or harmful, they may not provide the results the practitioner and consumer depend upon. In order to set expiration dates, the manufacturer must perform stability tests showing how much degradation of the product occurs over time, and put in enough of the raw material to compensate for any lost potency. Expiration dates ensure that the product will provide consistent results.

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**Question - 28:**

How long do vitamins last?

**Ans:**

The Therapeutic Goods Administration dictates that if supplement manufacturers list an expiration date on their products, they must maintain records that prove that the products contain what the labels state, at expiration. This is because, like everything else, vitamins have a "lifespan." While they are generally quite stable, especially when kept away from direct sunlight and high temperatures, there may be a gradual loss of potency over time. A reputable company will slightly "overfill" their supplements, meaning that they put enough of each nutrient in the tablet to compensate for any loss of potency over time. A two-year expiration date means that



the company is certifying that the product will continue to meet or exceed label claim for two years from the date of manufacture.

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**Question - 29:**

Is it OK to take vitamins after their expiration date?

**Ans:**

No. While vitamins generally do not deteriorate into something harmful or toxic over time, it is possible for the potency to diminish as time passes. The expiration date is there to ensure that you are getting the freshest products, with the highest possible quality and potency. To get the results you are seeking, it is best not to take a supplement that has gone past its expiration date.

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**Question - 30:**

Why do some supplements cost more than others that look like they contain the same ingredients?

**Ans:**

Simply looking at the ingredients does not necessarily provide enough information to assess value. For example, the same amount of elemental calcium can be found as, among others, citrate or carbonate, but have significantly different absorption dynamics. Carbonates are much cheaper, and so are often used by supplement manufacturers, even though the more expensive citrates are better absorbed. Frequently, higher quality comes with a higher price.

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**Question - 31:**

What does bioavailability mean?

**Ans:**

Bioavailability refers to the potential a product has to be absorbed into the bloodstream and have the desired impact on the consumer. In other words, a product with very high quality raw materials but is made in such a way that the tablet doesn't break down properly would have low bioavailability and would thus not do the patient any good. Disintegration time is an example of a test that measures aspects of bioavailability; it is the time it takes under controlled conditions for a tablet to break down completely. If a supplement breaks down when it is supposed to, there is a greater likelihood that it will be absorbed into the

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**Question - 32:**

Does stearic acid interfere with the absorption of vitamins and minerals?

**Ans:**

No. There is no evidence that stearic acid, in the levels used in tablet manufacturing, in any way interferes with or blocks breakdown and absorption of nutrients. Remember that the amount of stearic acid used in a tablet is much less than would be obtained from a salad with olive oil and vinegar dressing. (Olive oil is a source of stearic acid).

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**Question - 33:**

Why is stearic acid used in tablet manufacturing?

**Ans:**

During tablet manufacturing certain substance such as stearic acid are use to help powders flow smoothly through the tableting machines and to help the tablets hold their shape. Stearic acid is an ideal fatty acid to use because it is naturally occurring in food, is inert and therefore does not interfere with the proper utilization or absorption of the active ingredients in the tablet.

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**Question - 34:**

What is stearic acid and from what is it derived?

**Ans:**

Stearic acid is an essential saturated fatty acid that is found in all vegetable, seed, nut and animal oils. Although stearic acid can be from several sources, the most common source in better quality nutritional supplements is vegetable stearic acid.

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**Question - 35:**

Are capsules better than tablets?

**Ans:**

Capsules have some advantages in certain uses, but tablets have proven advantageous in others. For example, capsules increase the cost to the end user, it generally takes more capsules to contain the nutrients found in tablets, if the bottle is allowed to get too warm the capsules can melt or stick together, and the capsules have to be digested (broken down) before the nutrients inside can be released. On the "plus" side, capsules are generally easier to swallow, you can't tablet a liquid (which thus MUST be in capsules), and capsules can be made opaque to protect delicate and easily-lost nutrients (such as CQ 10). A reputable company will not be tied exclusively to capsules OR tablets, but will select the delivery method that is most appropriate to the nutrient and the marketplace, considering all variables in the selection process.

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**Question - 36:**

Why are tablet excipients necessary?



**Ans:**

Tableting agents and excipients are required to ensure quality control in the tablet-manufacturing process. Tableting is part art and part science. Knowing how even small differences in temperature and humidity will affect the tableting process requires years of experience to develop. Tablet excipients help ensure that the bulk powder flows smoothly through the equipment, and that the tablets are of the right consistency so they will break down in your body as predicted.

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**Question - 37:**

What are tablet excipients?

**Ans:**

Tablet excipients are agents used during the tableting process to help the powder flow through the equipment without sticking, or to improve the tablets' consistency, compressibility, or other desired characteristics.

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**Question - 38:**

What do tablet binders and fillers do?

**Ans:**

Binders and fillers are used during the tableting process to ensure that the tablet sticks together properly rather than crumbling in the bottle. For example, some vitamins are oils and others are powders. Binders, fillers and excipients help ensure the bulk powder flows smoothly through the equipment without caking or gumming, and helps make sure the tablet size and hardness are consistent.

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**Question - 39:**

Are tablet excipients, binders or fillers good or bad?

**Ans:**

It depends. Some excipients, binders or fillers are bad, because they can contribute to unwanted reactions in some people. Others are neutral (meaning they are neither digested nor absorbed), but they improve tablet function by ensuring it breaks down when it supposed to. The highest quality ingredients in a nutritional supplement could be useless if the tablet doesn't disintegrate properly, or crumbles in the bottle. It is also important to remember that excipients can be made of natural, vegetable materials that are unlikely to contribute to any health problems of the patient, or they can be made from other chemicals that may cause problems for some people. Artificial colors, dyes, preservatives or coating agents have been implicated for years as possible concerns. A reputable company producing high quality nutritional supplements will exercise great care in the selection of tableting agents to ensure consistent quality throughout the product, not just in the raw material selection.

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