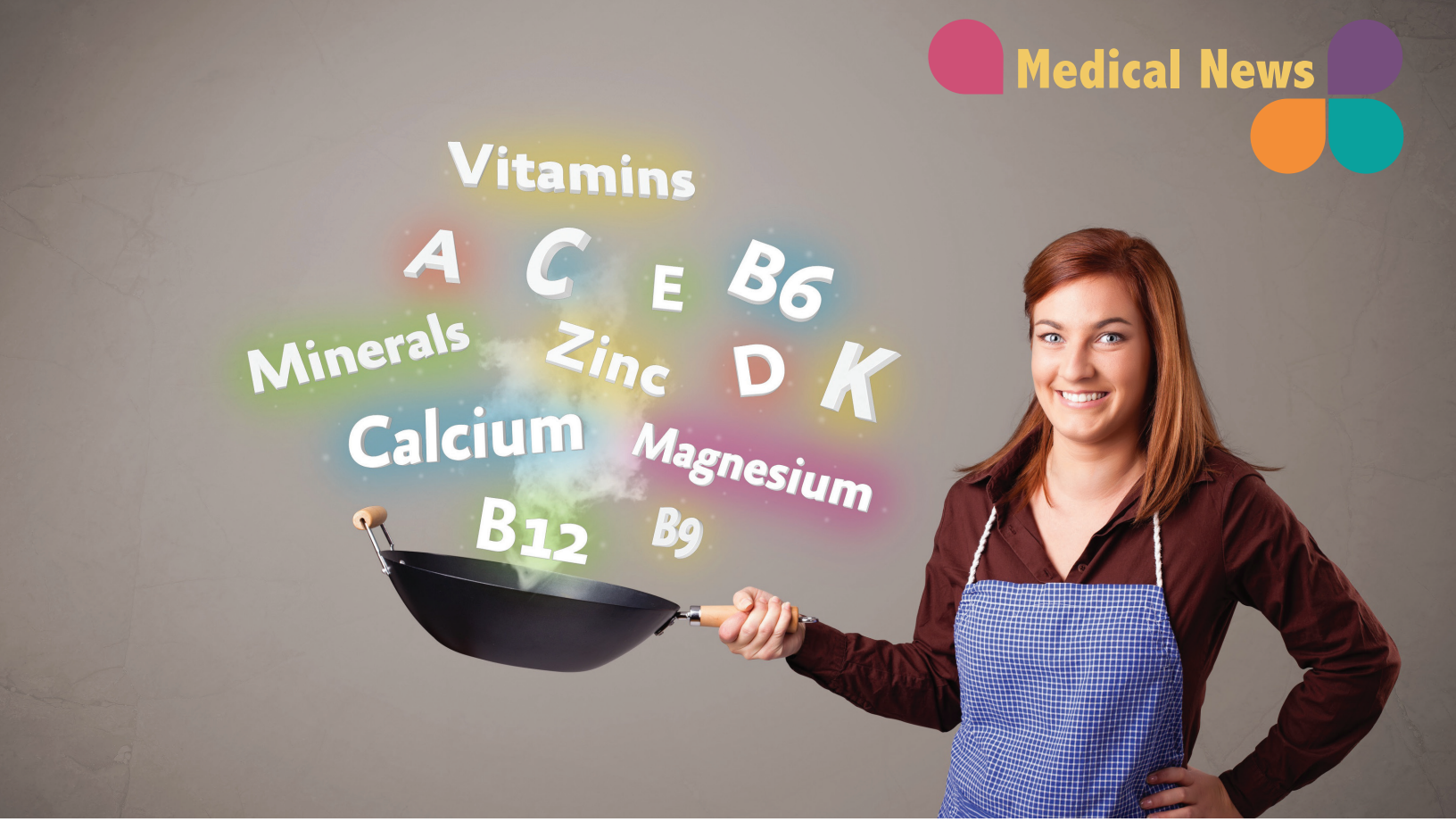

So do you really need that vitamin?

Before taking a daily vitamin or dietary supplement, you might want to think about what you're really consuming, suggests a Kansas State University human nutritionist.

"Supplements are not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration like other drugs are regulated, which is something I think a lot of people don't realize," said Brian Lindshield, assistant professor of human nutrition.

Lindshield researches supplements to see if the ingredients listed on the label actually match what is found in the bottle. You don't always get what you pay for and think you're getting.

If you want to get the most accurate product, look for the bottles with the more descriptive labels. Also, paying a little extra will usually get you the ingredients you are seeking.

"You should probably avoid buying the cheapest supplement available because if the manufacturer is cutting corners to get the price really cheap, they probably are not using the same standards that the manufacturers of more expensive products are," Lindshield said.

Another tip: Don't expect supplements to make up for a poor diet. "Vitamins and minerals will prevent deficiency, but it's not going to make up for a lot of the chronic disease risks that come with an unhealthy diet," Lindshield said.

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