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TIME TO GO GREEN

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Innovation in the field of nutrition and supplements

As consumers demand more from the food system to support their health and wellbeing, innovation in targeted nutrition continues to grow and evolve **By Varun Suri**

IN an era of rapid technological progress and rewards for innovation in food and nutrition science, there is a critical opportunity to improve health and reduce the risk of disease. As more and more consumers choose food based on their individual perceptions of healthy eating, the era of personalised nutrition is dawning, where science and technology can dictate which foods are right for us, not only for issues like weight management, but more importantly, to maintain our health and wellness.

Ever-changing health trends and a wealth of easily accessible health and nutrition information are blurring the boundaries of the types of foods consumers use to maintain health.

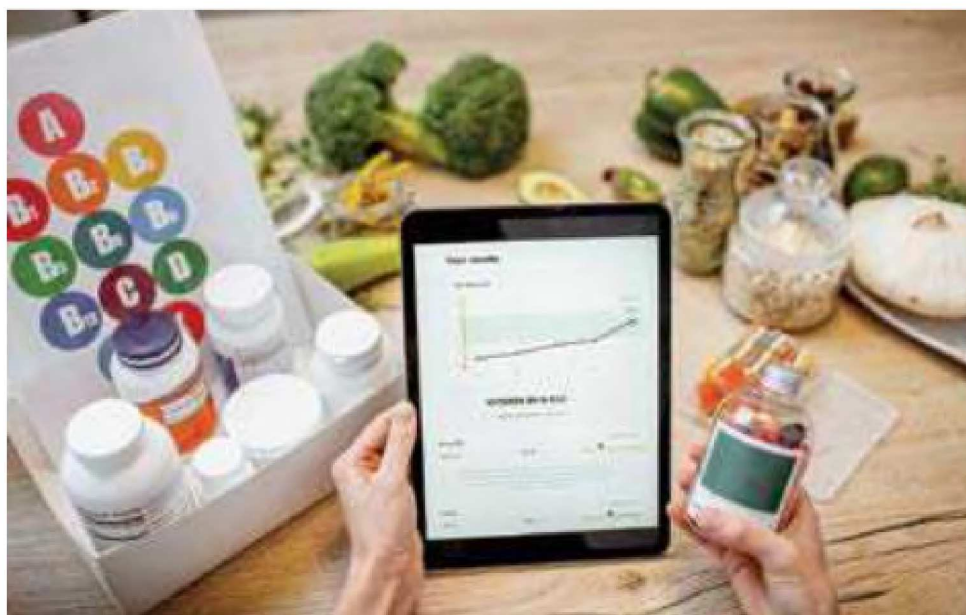
Consumers have become increasingly health conscious in recent years. The supplement market has also experienced tremendous growth, leading to

marketing campaigns encouraging consumers to increase their intake of vitamins and minerals to improve their health. Demand for custom-made

vitamins, minerals, and dietary supplements is spurring innovation. However, innovation must focus on actually addressing consumer needs by launching products that are result-oriented and pocket-friendly.

According to a report issued on February by EY India, the dietary supplement industry in India increased at a CAGR of roughly 15 per cent to reach Rs 331 billion in FY21. This market, which has long been deemed high-potential due to the rise in lifestyle disorders, has seen an accelerated





adoption curve following Covid-19. In India, 94 per cent of people are concerned about their family's health, compared to 82 per cent elsewhere. This report titled 'Sunrise Consumer Health and Nutrition Sector' also showed that the demand for herbal supplements, vitamins, and minerals has increased by more than 25 per cent in the previous year.

Specific needs

Increased consumer focus on the benefits of protein has led several companies to offer a variety of protein supplements. Some of the most innovative products released last year focused on immunity, mental health, and natural and organic products. As consumers demand more from the food system to support their health and wellbeing, innovation in targeted nutrition continues to grow and evolve.

Purposeful innovations in nutrition offer promising opportunities for consumers and can also be used in medical practice and food habits.

For useful nutritional innovation especially in a diverse country like India, it is critical to understand what the specific nutritional needs of small and more defined populations are – and ultimately the exact, specific nutritional needs of any given individual – in order to increase the effectiveness of nutrition in relation to promoting optimal health. A better basic understanding of metabolomics and which key metabolites to use as indicators of optimal nutritional status and health is the penultimate nutritional innovation.

Combining all of the aforementioned endpoints into one device that can measure our nutrition and health status in real-time

will be a huge breakthrough in nutrition.

Leveraging relevant technological advances and discovering new trends in sports nutrition is essential to maximise performance and help active consumers achieve the healthy lifestyle they aspire to. Finding the right balance between performance-focused and active lifestyle products is critical to improving the future prospects of sports nutrition.

A focus on sports nutrition products to improve mental focus, energy and endurance is also important for the future. Branched-chain amino acids (BCAAs) are one of the key nutrients required for repairing and building of muscles. Traditionally, it used to come without any flavour; now through innovation, it is available in multiple flavours, is naturally sweetened and yet

sugar free.

Beyond sports, there has been an increase in intake of nutrients that enhances your overall personality. Keratin, a protein that makes up your hair, skin, and nails, as well as Rosehip, Retinol, Biotin, and PABA, all increase your body's keratin structure. These are vitamins that promote healthy hair growth. High quality, high purity and highly absorbable omega-3 is another boon for Indians. It is great to maintain heart and brain health and is essential for people above 30 years. Research suggests that aging can be controlled greatly with intake of omega-3.

In the current pandemic times, we have seen how health, wellness and protection have become the main axis for brands and consumers and how this affects the innovation of the supplement industry. Consumers prioritise their wellbeing and this has spurred the growth of the vitamin, mineral and supplement industry. As evident in many areas of the supplement industry, from supply chain transparency to ingredient delivery, personalisation and research; innovative ideas are the cogs of the industry. Providing quality and science to consumers at an affordable price is the real innovation for a health-care company. **BW**

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