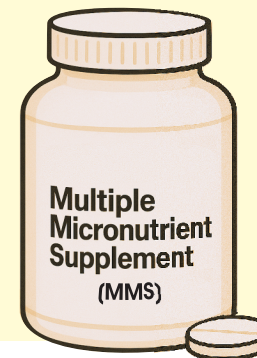




Republic of Zambia  
Ministry of Health

# COUNSELLING CARD

MULTIPLE MICRONUTRIENT  
SUPPLEMENTS (MMS)  
FOR PREGNANT WOMEN



THE POWER OF  
**nutritio<sup>n</sup>**



World Vision

# What are Multiple Micronutrient Supplements (MMS)?

These are daily nutritional supplements given to a pregnant woman for a healthy pregnancy and baby



# What are Multiple Micronutrient Supplements (MMS)?



## Key Information

- These are daily nutritional supplements given to a pregnant woman for a healthy pregnancy and baby
- Unlike Iron and Folic Acid (IFA) which are 2 separate tablets, MMS is a single tablet containing 15 micronutrients (minerals and vitamins) that are important for the good health of the pregnant woman and the baby

## Key Nutrients in MMS

### Vitamins

- **Vitamins B1, B3 and B6:** Fetal brain and nervous system development
- **Vitamin E:** Antioxidant, may help increase immunity and reduce stillbirth and prematurity
- **Vitamin D:** Healthy bones, prevents rickets in infancy
- **Vitamin B2:** Helps metabolism of folic acid and other B vitamins, nutrient absorption, and healthy eyes and skin
- **Vitamin A:** increases iron metabolism and is important for visual health, immune function and fetal growth and development
- **Vitamin C:** Helps in Iron absorption
- **Vitamin B12:** Important for normal cell division and nervous system developments
- **Folic Acid:** Prevents birth defects early in pregnancy

### Minerals

- **Selenium:** Supports iodine metabolism, antioxidant
- **Zinc:** Positive impact on birthweight
- **Iodine:** Essential in fetal brain development
- **Copper:** Tissue development of the infant in the first six months
- **Iron:** Prevents anemia caused by iron deficiency, which is related to fatigue and weakness, increased perinatal morbidity and mortality, low birth weight, prematurity, and disrupted fetal brain development

# How to take MMS correctly

Take one MMS tablet every day throughout your pregnancy as recommended by a Health Care Provider



# How to take MMS correctly

## Step-by-Step Instructions



- Start taking MMS as soon as you know you are pregnant
- Take one MMS tablet everyday throughout your pregnancy. If any tablets remain after delivery, continue to take until all the tablets are finished
- Take your MMS tablet at least 2 hours after a meal
- Do not share your MMS tablets with another person
- Talk to your HCP if you have any concerns or for more information
- If you miss a dose, take 1 MMS tablet as soon as you remember and get back to your normal time of taking the next day. Do not take 2 tablets in a day

## Tips for MMS storage

- Always keep the MMS tablets in their original bottle and the cap tightly closed when not in use
- Always store MMS bottles in a cool, dry place (avoid hot surfaces or in the fridge)
- Keep away from the reach of children

# Benefits of taking MMS for the mother and baby

Taking MMS provides important nutrients for the good health of the mother and baby



# Benefits of taking MMS for the mother and baby



Mother	Baby
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Prevents anaemia and helps reduce tiredness</li><li>○ Supports bone health</li><li>○ Reduces nutrition related complications during pregnancy</li><li>○ Boosts the immune system</li><li>○ Reduces night blindness in pregnancy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Reduces the risk of birth abnormalities</li><li>○ Support healthy brain development</li><li>○ Promotes strong bones and teeth</li><li>○ Reduces the chance of the baby being born with low weight</li><li>○ Reduces the chance of premature births</li><li>○ Reduces the chance of baby dying before 6 months</li><li>○ Reduces the chance of baby dying before birth</li></ul>

# Support from male partner and family members

Pregnant women need family support to successfully take MMS



# Support from male partner and family members



## Support may include:

- Remind the pregnant woman to take MMS tablets everyday
- Help the pregnant woman to tick on the MMS Calendar in the correct box each time she takes
- Set daily alarm reminders for taking MMS
- Keep MMS bottle safe, where it is visible and away from children
- Help the pregnant woman seek health care at the nearest Health Facility
- Partner should continue to accompany the pregnant woman for ANC visits

# Nutrition during pregnancy

Eat a variety of locally available healthy foods for a healthy pregnancy and baby

Pulses, nuts and seeds



Vegetables



Fruits



Milk and milk products



Fish, insects, and animal source foods



Cereals, starchy roots and tubers,



# Nutrition during pregnancy

## Eat well for a healthy pregnancy



- Eat different types of food from each of the six food groups everyday:
  1. Whole or milled whole grains (cereals), starchy roots and tubers as part of your meals every day for a healthy heart and weight
  2. Plenty of different coloured vegetables every day to provide vitamins, minerals and roughage to prevent diseases
  3. Different coloured fruits every day to provide vitamins and minerals to prevent diseases
  4. Chicken and other poultry, fish, eggs, insects or caterpillars daily to build and repair your body.
  5. Beans, cowpeas, ground nuts, or nuts daily to maintain good health. All these foods are rich sources of protein and a good substitute for meat.
  6. Milk and milk products or foods rich in calcium every day for healthy bones and teeth.
- During pregnancy, eat something in between main meals
- Pregnant women should be encouraged to eat more food even during illness
- Eating food alone may not always provide the required nutrients. Take MMS to supplement food for a healthy pregnancy outcome
- MMS contains more nutrients that help the pregnant woman and the baby to be healthy
- Engage in physical activities at least 30 minutes every day. Choose activities that you enjoy and can do regularly at home and at work, such as walking, carrying out household activities or playing to avoid being overweight and to maintain a healthy heart

# Does Multiple Micronutrient Supplements (MMS) have any side effects?

Most women do not have any side effects at all



# Do Multiple Micronutrient Supplements (MMS) have any side effects?



## Some side effects

Yes, however, Most women do not have any side effects at all. Some women may experience mild side effects which reduce as they continue taking MMS. Some side effects include dark stool, dizziness, constipation, diarrhoea, change in taste and stomach upset

## Managing side effects

- Take MMS at least 2 hours after eating food
- Taking MMS at night reduces side effects
- Take MMS with plenty of water
- You may continue to pass dark stool, this is normal. Continue to take plenty of water
- If side effects continue, go and talk to the healthcare provider at the nearest health facility

# Your Questions on Multiple Micronutrient Supplements (MMS) Answered

Here are some common questions about MMS and their answers to help you stay informed and confident



# Your Questions on Multiple Micronutrient Supplements (MMS) Answered



## Frequently asked questions

Q1: Where can I get MMS?

A. At the health facility for free

Q2: Can MMS, and iron and folic acid (IFA) be taken at the same time?

A. No. MMS already contains Iron and Folic Acid. However, you can take if recommended by the health care provider for treatment of anemia

Q3: Should you continue attending antenatal care (ANC) if you are taking MMS?

A. Yes. Continue attending ANC while taking MMS to receive other services important for your health and that of the baby

Q4: Should you take another MMS tablet if you vomit after taking one?

A. No. Continue taking one MMS tablet the following day at your usual time. If vomiting persists, go to your nearest health facility

Q5: Does it matter at what stage you start taking MMS in your pregnancy?

A: Yes. Starting to take MMS tablets within the first 3 months of pregnancy helps you to get more benefits for you and the baby. However, MMS will be given to all pregnant women regardless of when they attend ANC

Q6: Can you continue taking MMS after you skip a few days?

A: Yes. If you skip for a few days, take one MMS tablet as soon as you remember and get back to your normal time of taking the next day. Do not take more than 1 MMS tablet in a day

Q7: Can you take MMS immediately after taking food?

A: No. It is advisable to take MMS at least 2 hours after eating food for the supplements to work well

Q8: Do you have any more questions or concerns on MMS?...