

Why Pills Don't Fit Modern Life: The Burden of Too Many Capsules

Analysis by [Dr. Joseph Mercola](#)

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STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › The morning handful of capsules is a holdover from a slower era — nearly every other part of daily life has been simplified, but the pill routine never was
- › The sheer number of capsules required for some nutritional supplement regimens is itself a barrier to long-term adherence
- › Difficulty swallowing pills is far more common than most people assume, and larger pills are dramatically harder to get down — a common reason for why so many people fail to maintain their supplement routines
- › Multiple daily schedules and travel make a pill or capsule routine fragile; it's often the first thing to fall by the wayside on a busy or disrupted day
- › For suitable ingredients, reformulating capsules into a powder that can be mixed into food or beverages removes most of that friction, thereby giving you the best chance of staying consistent in the long term

The handful-of-pills routine belongs to another era. Picture the morning ritual the supplement world quietly expects of you: a little assembly line of bottles on the counter, the careful counting, the palm filling up with capsules of different sizes and colors, and then the part nobody enjoys — getting the whole mouthful down with a gulp of water, hoping the big one doesn't catch on the way.

We have all just accepted this. But step back and it's a strangely outdated way to take care of yourself. Almost every other part of modern life has been simplified to fit the way people actually live. Yet the standard supplement routine has barely changed: bottles, capsules, timing, water, swallowing, sorting, and refills. The rest of life moved toward convenience. Supplements stayed stuck in the pillbox.

The Pill Routine Takes More Than It Seems

The capsule routine looks simple, but it quietly asks a great deal — and each demand is a place where the routine can break. Start with the count. The sheer number of pills is a barrier all by itself. In a multicenter study of older adults managing several conditions, three-quarters reported a high treatment burden and more than two-thirds did not take their medications as directed — and the strongest drivers of that burden were the complexity of the regimen and the number of pills to take.¹

It's a consistent finding: the more pill-heavy and more complex the routine, the more reliably people abandon it.

Then there's the swallowing itself, which is a real barrier and a surprisingly common one. In a survey of outpatients picking up their prescriptions, more than 40% reported difficulty swallowing pills, and the authors noted that international estimates run anywhere from roughly 29% to 55% of adults, with about a third saying the trouble had caused them to miss doses.²

And it gets worse as the pills get bigger. When researchers analyzed what makes a tablet or capsule hard to get down, oversized pills stood out as by far the strongest factor, raising the odds of difficulty roughly tenfold.³ Anyone who has hesitated before the largest capsule in the lineup already knows this. Even people who don't think of themselves as having trouble quietly dread the big one.

Now stack on the logistics. Two or three different schedules a day turn a simple act of self-care into a small management job — this bottle in the morning, that one with lunch, another at night. Travel makes it worse: the bottles are bulky, the routine is fragile, and

taking a pile of capsules is easily forgotten on a busy trip. None of this fits modern life. It fits a slower, simpler era that no longer exists for most of us.

So we asked an obvious question that the industry mostly steps around. What if you didn't have to choke down a fistful of capsules at all? What if the format itself were built around how people actually live — easier to take, and easy to keep up even when the day is a mess?

A Format Built for Real Life

That's the direction we're going — away from the pill pile and toward formats that are simpler to use and supports a food-first ideology. In practice, that means taking the ingredients suited to it and reformulating them out of capsules and into a clean powder that can be stirred into a glass of water, a smoothie, a bowl of yogurt or oatmeal, or sprinkled on whatever else you're already eating. The supplement routine stops being a separate event you have to remember and becomes part of a meal you were having anyway.

Not every ingredient can be turned into a powder. Some are needed in doses so small they're better measured into a small pill; some taste or keep better sealed away; some contain oils that call for a softgel. The goal isn't to abolish pills or capsules from our product line — it's to stop reaching for it by default, and to use a powder wherever the ingredient genuinely allows it.

For the many that do, the change can be dramatic: nothing to count, nothing to choke down, no big capsule to dread, and no bulky bottles to pack when you travel. All of that can translate into a routine that doesn't collapse the moment your schedule does.

Why the Format Is the Whole Point

The point isn't novelty for its own sake. It's that the format chosen can significantly affect adherence — and consistency is what ultimately makes the difference, because a supplement only does something if you actually take it. A supplement that's pleasant

and effortless to take gets taken. A handful of capsules that feels like a chore gets skipped, then forgotten at the back of a shelf.

This is the thread that runs through everything we've been saying in this series. The best formula in the world is worthless if it ends up in your cabinet instead of in you. Modern life is busy, mobile, and unpredictable. Your nutrition should be built for that life, not for the imaginary, unhurried one the capsule routine was designed around.

The Bottom Line

While the fistful of capsules strategy is convenient for those who make and ship supplements, it quietly works against the person trying to stay consistent. For the ingredients that allow it, a clean powder you mix into food or a drink removes most of the friction that leads to skipped doses and dropped regimens. Once a routine is built around the life you actually live, consistency stops being a losing battle.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What's wrong with capsules?

A: Nothing, for the right ingredients. Capsules protect fragile compounds and allow precise small doses. The problem is using them by default for everything, including ingredients that would be far easier to take as a powder. The cost shows up as friction: counting pills, swallowing, dreading the big one, and keeping multiple schedules straight. That friction is the main reason supplement routines fall apart.

Q: Is difficulty swallowing pills really that common?

A: More common than most people think. In one survey of outpatients, more than 40% reported difficulty swallowing pills, with international estimates ranging from roughly a quarter to over half of adults — and a meaningful share said it had caused

them to miss doses. Larger pills are by far the hardest to get down. Many people who'd never call it a "problem" still quietly dread the biggest capsule in the pile.

Q: How does a powder improve adherence to a supplement regimen?

A: A powder you mix into food or a beverage removes the swallowing barrier entirely and folds the supplement into something you already do — eating. There's nothing to count out, nothing to choke down. For suitable ingredients, it turns the most-skipped part of the day into one effortless motion.

Q: Does switching from a capsule to a powder mean a weaker product?

A: No. It means the product is designed around what you'll actually keep doing. The format largely determines consistency, and consistency is what makes a supplement worth taking at all. A simpler routine you can sustain for years will do far more for you than an elaborate one you abandon in a month.

These statements have not been evaluated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

This article is for general education. The products described are dietary supplements intended to support normal health and wellbeing as part of a food-first lifestyle. They are not a substitute for a varied diet, a healthy lifestyle, or the advice of your physician. If you are pregnant, nursing, taking medication, or managing a health condition, talk with your healthcare provider before beginning any supplement.

This article is for informational purposes only and does not constitute medical advice. Consult a qualified healthcare provider before making changes to your health regimen.

Sources and References

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- ² [Int J Lang Commun Disord. 2026;61\(3\):e70258](#)

- ³ J Med Internet Res. 2024;26:e54645