

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a single, large, oval-shaped gold pill. The hand is positioned as if about to drop the pill. The background is a light, textured surface.

Easy As ABC?

Why pills
can't replace food

By Sara Aase

Brianna Kinney knows some smart mice.

She credits vitamin B₆ with the little guys' spike in intellect. For a science fair project, Kinney, who was a senior last year at Big Foot High School in Walworth, Wis., tested how quickly mice that were on different diets navigated a maze.

The group with no dietary supplement "sat there like bumps on a log," taking as long as 20 minutes to complete the maze, she says. The mice on vitamin B₆, however, performed up to 150 times faster.

Kinney, now studying at Hollins University in Roanoke, Va., doesn't take vitamins. But after her study, she wonders if she should.

No Substitute

Whether or not to take a multivitamin is a question without an easy answer. Our bodies need nutrients such as vitamins (from plants or

