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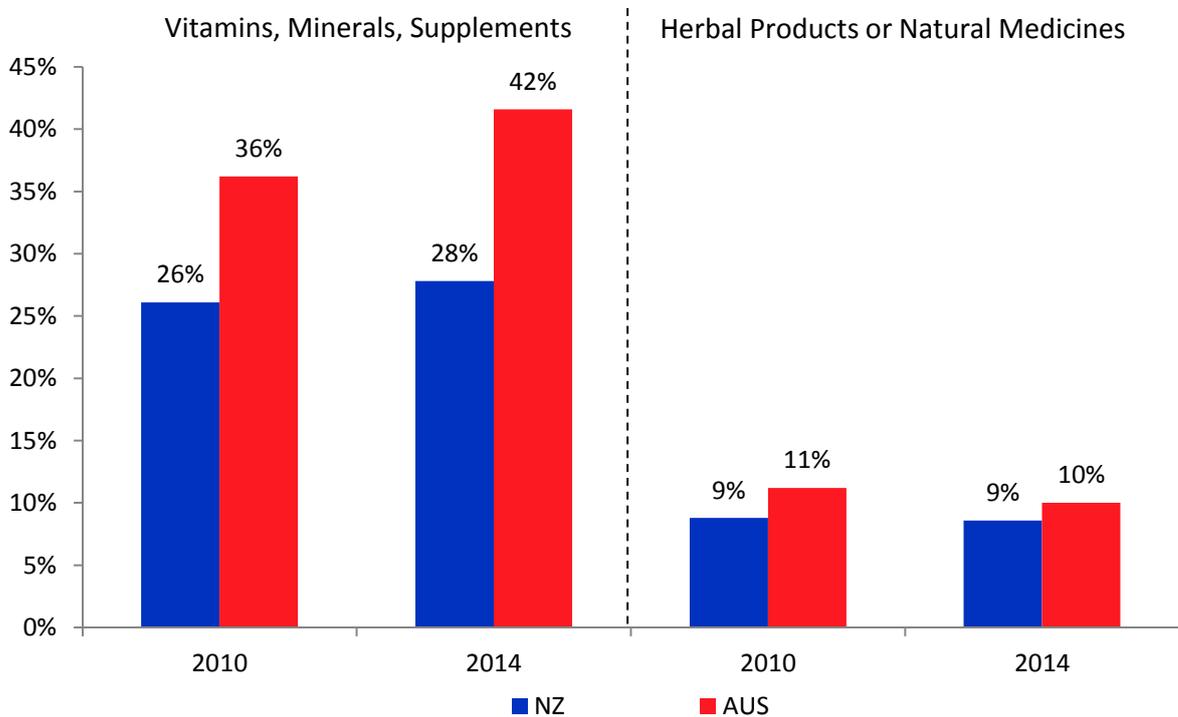
How vital are vitamins?

Do vitamins really work? Some people swear by them, while others insist that a balanced diet contains all the nutrients we need. According to the latest findings from Roy Morgan Research, it seems the former group is growing at a faster rate in Australia than in New Zealand. In both countries, however, the vast majority of people who buy vitamins (80% in Australia and 82% in New Zealand) say they're 'feeling well and in good health'.

In the year to January 2014, 28% of New Zealanders aged 14+ (or 995,000 people) bought vitamins, minerals and/or supplements in an average six months, up slightly from 26% (or 907,000 people) in 2010. In Australia, the proportion taking vitamins is higher and the increase was more substantial: from 36% (6,614,000 people) to 42% (8,001,000 people) over the same time period.

There has been little movement in the sales of herbal products or natural medicines since 2010. Over the last four years, the proportion of people buying these items remained stable in New Zealand and decreased by 10% in Australia.

Percentage of Kiwis and Aussies who bought health products in an average 6 months



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (New Zealand), February 2010 – January 2011 (n = 11,632) and February 2013 – January 2014 (n = 12,480); Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), February 2010 – January 2011 (n = 18,862) and February 2013 – January 2014 (n = 19,216)

Not only do more Australians than New Zealanders buy vitamins in any given six months, they're also far more likely to buy them from a chemist than their Kiwi counterparts, who prefer shopping for vitamins at the supermarket. In the year to January 2014, nearly half (48%) of all Aussie vitamin buyers made their purchase at a chemist, while only 22% of Kiwi vitamin buyers did the same.

On the other hand, just over 41% of New Zealand's vitamin buyers bought them from a supermarket, compared with 30% of Australian vitamin buyers. Health food stores were the third most popular place of purchase for people from both countries.

Different ... but similar

However, Kiwi and Aussie vitamin buyers do coincide in certain respects. Nearly three out of every 10 people who purchase vitamins in both countries are aged between 35 and 49, and around a quarter are from the 50-64 age bracket. Most are based in major or capital cities (55% of New Zealand and 63% of Australian vitamin buyers), and the majority are women (62% in New Zealand and 59% in Australia). And as mentioned earlier, the vast majority in both countries say they feel well and in good health.

Pip Elliott, General Manager, Roy Morgan Research NZ, says:

"As we've seen [previously](#), a much smaller proportion of New Zealanders than Australians buy vitamins in an average six-month period, although the people buying them are fairly similar in age, gender and geographical location.

"True, this could simply mean that Kiwis feel healthy enough already without having to resort to supplements. Or it could be that New Zealand offers genuine growth opportunities for marketers of these products who understand that Kiwi buyers differ from their Australian counterparts.

"New Zealanders' distinct preference for picking up their vitamins from the supermarket, presumably as part of a larger grocery shop, is a key example. Whereas Australians don't mind detouring via the chemist to make their purchase, it seems that Kiwis feel more time-poor and just want to grab their vitamins on the go. Not only do more than three-quarters of New Zealand's vitamin buyers say they 'live a full and busy life' (compared to 66% of Australians), they're also more likely to agree with the statement 'There are not enough hours in the day'. No wonder the convenience of a one-stop shop is so important to them – they don't have time to spare."

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About Roy Morgan Research

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in New Zealand, the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years' experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

In Australia, Roy Morgan Research is considered to be the authoritative source of information on financial behaviour, readership, voting intentions and consumer confidence. Roy Morgan Research is a specialist in recontact customised surveys which provide invaluable and effective qualitative and quantitative information regarding customers and target markets.

Roy Morgan Research New Zealand

Roy Morgan Research was set up in New Zealand in the 1990s and has been collecting information across a wide range of industries in New Zealand ever since. Roy Morgan currently has over 10 years of trended data on a geographically and demographically representative sample of over 12,000 New Zealanders aged 14+.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
7,500	±1.1	±1.0	±0.7	±0.5
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3