

Vitamin Pills

Just a waste of money?

Context

A recent study by Dr Jane Armitage from the University of Oxford has shown that vitamin use may not have medical benefits.

The clinical trial which followed 20,500 people for over five years has discovered that the protective effects of antioxidant vitamins appear to be unfounded.

The £21 million study has provided disappointing findings and has concluded that simply eating fruit and vegetables would be more beneficial.

Vitamin and mineral supplements are just that. They are not a cure all. Neither are they strictly necessary except under conditions that you can find out for yourself. I always have broken and split finger nails. The only way to stop this is to take calcium and vitamin D capsules. Instant fix and I don't have to drink the equivalent of three pints of milk a day, saving considerably on my fat intake!

Anon, UK

Who funded the study? Did the study use naturally occurring vitamin complexes or synthesised vitamins?

David, UK

Another controversial study on the effects of vitamins. Does this mean all those other studies which have found beneficial results were wrong? Apart from anything else Vitamin C & E are known to have useful antioxidant properties. One study several years ago found that 800 units of Vitamin E and 1000mg vitamin C could mop up 50g of fat after a meal. It would be interesting to know who funded the research as there are certain vested interested parties who are anti- vitamins.

Stephen, England

You don't need vitamin pills if you eat a balanced diet. People who don't eat a balanced diet get what they deserve and people who say their lifestyle is too busy to eat a balanced diet need to take a look at their life and change it.

Martin, England

Martin, England: If small children have been fed an unbalanced diet (junk food) by their parents then do these children "get what they deserve"? How about the starving people of the world - do they also "get what they deserve"?

David Furness, Northolt, England

I take them regularly as I work late and don't always eat well. Zinc tablets have suppressed my hayfever to a point where it is no longer noticeable.

Steve Graham, Germany

My great uncle is still fit, healthy and largely independent at 91, yet has never touched a vitamin pill in his life. A healthy and balanced diet, and plenty of exercise is all you need - I know living proof of it.

Dan, UK

This is multi-million dollar pharmaceutical company sponsored campaign to make over-the counter preventive medicines inaccessible and make them prescription only drugs. Human bodies become very strong and resilient with the help of vitamins and minerals making it difficult for them to sell their drugs when people don't fall sick as often as when they don't take vitamins.

Jenny, UK

A few comments before we throw are vitamins into the trash: 1 The study only examined a very limited number of vitamins and only confirms previous research. 2. It is very patronising to suggest to people to get their vitamins from fruit and vegetables considering that good quality food is prohibitively expensive for low income families. 3 Even the most discriminating eater finds it difficult to consume the recommended levels of vitamins from their diet on a daily basis. My advice to the Oxford dons is "Keep taking the pills!"

Paul Reed, US

Well, it is fact known to medical professionals long before. Vitamins supplements are helpful to those people who are risk of developing deficiency because of many causes or there are specific reasons like folic acid supplements in pregnancy or vitamin D supplements to prevent rickets but random intake of vitamins in healthy individuals can have harmful effects It is waste of resources, time and money which can be better utilised to improve healthy dietary intake.

C P Singh, Leeds UK