

Vitamin C Regains Popularity With New Discoveries

Vitamin C was one of the earliest supplement fads, championed by Nobel Prize-winning physicist Linus Pauling in the early 1970s as a cure for ailments ranging from cancer to the common cold.

However, by the 1990s, the nutrient fell out of favor, and Pauling was accused of quackery by some mainstream doctors. By the time Pauling died in 1994 at age 93, vitamin C use was in decline. Recent science is showing that the great scientist may have been right all along. Here are new findings about the venerable vitamin:

- **Fights superbugs.** Scientists recently discovered that vitamin C kills antibiotic-resistant tuberculosis germs
- **Cuts the risk of colds in half.** A review of five randomized trials on people undergoing heavy short-term physical stress (such as long-distance runners and soldiers in training) found that taking vitamin C cut the number of expected common colds in half.
- **Reduces shortness of breath.** The vitamin was found to help people who become short of breath or coughed during exercise. Findings in the *British Medical Journal* (BMJ) prompted the lead scientist in the study to recommend vitamin C as an inexpensive and readily available supplement for people with lung issues or who have problems exercising because of breathing problems.
- **Lowers cholesterol.** A series of studies, including one that analyzed 13 randomized, placebo-control studies (the so-called “gold standard” of medical research), found that taking vitamin C regularly lowers LDL-cholesterol (the so-called “bad” cholesterol) as well as triglycerides, which are now considered in some cases even more deadly than LDL-cholesterol.

According to David Brownstein, M.D., one of the nation's top holistic doctors and longtime advocate of vitamin C therapy, the supplement's comeback is long overdue.

"Doctors lost interest in vitamin C because they wanted to prescribe antibiotics to everyone," he told Newsmax Health. "Now that the dangers of antibiotic overuse are becoming known, there should be more research on vitamin C to fight infection.

"Before antibiotics became popular, vitamin C was used to cure diseases like polio and pertussis (whooping cough), so there is no reason why it wouldn't treat those diseases today, as well as the newer diseases."

In his practice, Brownstein uses vitamin C to treat arthritis, asthma, allergies, constipation, infections, thyroid disease, sub-clinical scurvy, constipation and other ailments. He recommends 3,000 to 5,000 milligrams of vitamin C daily for these diseases.

Vitamin C also has potential in treating cancer, he said. He recommends 10,000 to 20,000 mg for cancer patients.

Megadoses of vitamin C generally have no side effects other than diarrhea for some people, which goes away when the dose is decreased, Dr. Brownstein said.

Another proponent of vitamin C is top cardiologist Chauncey Crandall, M.D., who says it is an excellent weapon against heart disease. "Lots of people already take vitamin C to prevent colds, but it does more than that, it also helps protect the heart," he said.

According to Dr. Crandall, vitamin C aids the heart in three ways: First, it helps reduce concentrations of C-reactive protein in the blood. The body produces C-reactive protein during inflammation, which is increasingly being seen as a precursor for heart disease, diabetes, and Alzheimer's

disease.

Second, vitamin C is a powerful antioxidant, which means it helps the body's cells reduce the oxidation that occurs with metabolism. Oxidation creates free radicals, which can damage the heart's coronary arteries, setting the stage for atherosclerosis, the disease process that causes coronary heart disease.

And third, vitamin C improves the overall functioning of the heart, in addition to its cholesterol-lowering power, Dr. Crandall said.

"Along with exercise and a plant-based diet, vitamin C is one of the best things you can do for your heart," he said.

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