

Whole Foods vs. Synthetic Vitamin E

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Lynn Mayer, MA, CNC

Last week a study reported in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) that Vitamin E had “no particular benefit in cardiovascular events or cancer” in the women they had been following for 10 years. This is a great opportunity for conversation as to why synthetic Vitamin E does not provide the same health benefit as does the vitamin as it is found in nature.

A vitamin is much more than we have been taught. It is not just one component such as “d-alpha tocopherol”, but instead an orchestra of synergistic nutrients which must all be in place for the vitamin to be utilized by our bodies. These nutrients include enzymes, coenzymes and trace minerals.

For example: Vitamin E. The *tocopherols* sold as Vitamin E are only just the outside layers of the Vitamin E complex. These tocopherols serve as anti-oxidants to protect the rest of, and the most potent components of, the Vitamin E complex from immediate oxidation or destruction. Although a part of the E complex, tocopherols are not the active part. In fractionating the vitamin and using only the tocopherols, it is as though using the tuba or percussion section in place of the whole orchestra.

One of the nutrients that every vitamin contains at its core is a specific trace mineral vital to its function. The essential trace mineral of the Vitamin E complex is Selenium. The body is designed to utilize food in its whole form. If only the refined tocopherols are consumed, the body must obtain the Selenium from somewhere in order to process the tocopherols. The body will borrow this mineral from its tissue reserves. The long term result of this action can cause a Selenium deficiency.

Although a supplement company may exclaim “contains ALL the mixed tocopherols” or “now with added Selenium”, you are still being robbed of all of the complexities of the whole vitamin as only nature makes it. In one test study done in 1946, the Vitamin E deficient laboratory animals fed tocopherol died sooner than the control animals receiving no vitamin at all.

A more recent study published in a 1994 New England Journal of Medicine tested the theory that anti-oxidants of beta-carotene (Vit A) and alpha-tocopherol (Vit E) would prevent lung cancer in smokers. After following 29,000 male smokers for six years, the stunned researchers found “a higher incidence of lung cancer among the men who received the synthetic supplements than among those who did not. In fact, this trial raises the possibility that these supplements may actually have harmful as well as beneficial effects”.

“People think that we can pull out the antioxidants, but research does not back

that up. Study after study says you gain the most benefit from whole foods" says David Klurfeld, national program leader for human nutrition at the USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

Vitamin E in its whole complex is found in these following foods: unrefined vegetable and seed oils, whole grains, fresh wheat germ and its oil, green leafy vegetables, egg yolk, butter, sesame seeds, peanut butter, asparagus, broccoli and sweet potatoes.

My work with my clients is always in guiding them into a return to the laws of nature by using the whole foods that nature provides, as well as using only those supplements made from concentrated whole foods. *You just can't fool Mother Nature.*

One of the documented findings of use of high dosage of tocopherols is in its tendency to cause bone and tooth decalcification. I have observed its Contribution to lower back pain. I invite you to take a look at your vitamin bottles and reconsider your synthetic Vitamin E use.