

Vitamin C

Vitamin C is a glucose molecule. It is made from glucose or blood sugar in the livers of most animals and because it is a glucose molecule it is totally non-toxic in any dose. Most of nature's creatures make their own ascorbic acid often in huge amounts, in a four step process. Genetically missing the last one of the four enzymes responsible for converting glucose into vitamin C, humans, monkeys, guinea pigs and fruit eating bats cannot make this conversion. They get their ascorbic acid from the vitamin C rich fruits, leaves, nuts and insects. We get our vitamin C from fruits and vegetables and from the animals that make vitamin C. at least that is what nature intended.

All traditional societies obtained sufficient vitamin C from their diets or they perished. Those who depended on animal products and their herds always obtained vitamin C from the milk, meat and blood even in the cold winters, as these animals could make their own ascorbic acid. These people fared considerably better than the agricultural peoples whose diets were rich in B vitamins but lacked vitamin C. In the hard frozen winters when no fresh fruit/berries and green plants were available many sickened and died before spring brought back the vitamin C rich growth.

Many cultures learnt to store perishable fruits and vegetables centuries before refrigeration through a process called lacto-fermentation. Starches and sugars in fruits and vegetables are converted into lactic acid by the many species of lactic acid producing bacteria. This proliferation of *lactobacilli* in fermented foods aids digestion and increases vitamin levels. Hence there is much more vitamin C in sauerkraut than there is in a fresh cabbage. Captain Cook carried barrels of sauerkraut on expeditions. Today with cold storage, produce that is picked well before it is ripe, long food miles and a diet with virtually no fermented foods many people are simply not getting enough vitamin C in the diet and not just in the winter.

Vitamin C can be used to treat everything from the common cold to cancer, schizophrenia, and drug withdrawal *with the right dose*. The RDA of 60 mg. is a ridiculously small dose, questionably sufficient to prevent scurvy as I covered last month and certainly not enough to afford good health. Supplementation is essential. Tablets or powder it doesn't really matter except to your purse. Vitamin C should be cheap – glucose is! It is the dose that matters, at least two to four grams daily. Personally I prefer the powder form – more pure and cheaper!

Vitamin C is destroyed by heat, so milk is no longer a good source due to pasteurization. Raw foods, including raw milk, cheese, fermented foods, *freshly* picked fruit and vegetables and rosehips are the best sources. Alcohol, smoking and many common drugs including aspirin and the contraceptive pill deplete the body of vitamin C. When the body is stressed vitamin C is used up faster – the white blood cells use it fighting infection so it needs to be replenished- two hourly I have found is best to keep symptoms at bay. It has been shown that under stress

animals produce significantly more vitamin C. Other indications of increased need include pregnancy, lactation, surgery, vaccination and illness.

When it comes to illness I believe there are 5,000mg, 10,000mg and 50,000 mg illnesses – cancer is a 50,000mg illness. In such circumstances and in such doses the need to by-pass the gut and deliver the vitamin into the bloodstream warrants the use of intravenous injection, for oral supplementation the indication is called ‘bowel tolerance’ and it means tissue saturation. The more vitamin C it takes to produce a loose bowel the more serious the illness. The indication that one has reached tissue saturation is a loose bowel or ‘tummy rumbling’

It is shameful and rather sad that with all the research and work done on vitamin C both in Australia and overseas that it is not more widely known and used in appropriate doses.

Vitamin C – the physical stress vitamin for good health, next month the B vitamins for good mental health.