

Benefits Of Vitamin E

Oxygen is one of the primary components of nature that supports life. The same oxygen, when inside the body, through certain molecules, becomes overly reactive and starts causing damage through the formation of free radicals. This is called oxidative stress. Vitamin E, as an antioxidant, helps prevent oxidative stress, thereby preventing cell damage and aging of the cells. The body absorbs cholesterol, a fatty substance in foods, and this is transferred from the liver to different tissues to be stored as fats. They are carried in the bloodstream by a molecule called Low Density Lipoproteins (LDL). When LDL gets oxidized, they react with cholesterol and a waxy fat substance called plaque is deposited on the walls of the arteries, which results in the stopping of blood flow, high blood pressure and cardio-vascular diseases. Vitamin E helps prevent the conversion of cholesterol into plaque, and this is done by alpha-tocopherol, not any other form of vitamin E, because liver places it preferentially in the bloodstream through a protein called alpha-tocopherol transfer protein. The effect of vitamin E in preventing cancer has not conclusively been established. According to a study by The American Association of Cancer Research, reduced risk of cancer is associated with an intake of vitamin E-rich foods. Contradictorily, a study done by Iowa Women's Health Study finds little evidence that vitamin E has protective effect against breast cancer in women after menopause. Hence, researchers have noted that not just vitamin E alone, but foods rich in antioxidants may be able to protect from cancer. Numerous studies have established the effect of vitamin E in protecting the skin from ultraviolet radiation, whose harmful effects include photodermatitis, an allergic type reaction to the UV rays of the sun. Vitamin E, whether taken through foods or applied topically, has been shown to protect skin cell membranes. Besides these benefits, vitamin E may protect from Alzheimer's, cataracts (clouding of the lens of the eyes), and pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas). Also, vitamin E may be beneficial in healing wounds and burns, reducing scars. The property of combating oxidative stress may be useful for athletes, as their oxygen utilization rate is higher than those not doing exercise, which results in increased generation of free radicals. Without proper conclusions from studies, it would be premature to opt for supplements without the advice of medical practitioner. However, it is generally recommended to take several servings of vegetables and fruits that are rich in antioxidants.

About the Author

To take some of the confusion out of vitamins and terms used in the vitamin. This can include vitamins, herbs, minerals and any botanical.

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