



USE OF VITAMIN C SUPPLEMENTS IN PATIENTS TREATED WITH ANTICANCER DRUGS

1 October, 2008. Further to a study published in the October 1 issue of Cancer Research¹ regarding vitamin C supplements and anticancer drugs, the Health Supplements Information Service (HSIS) would like to make the following comment.

FACT: Many people in the UK have diets in which the intake of vital vitamins and intakes fall below the recommended daily body intake need. A daily multivitamin and mineral supplement can help to make good this dietary gap.

Pamela Mason, scientific advisor and spokesperson for HSIS comments: "First and foremost, anyone with cancer or any other serious medical condition should seek the advice of their doctor or pharmacist before taking any product not prescribed by their doctor.

"Furthermore, it is important to note that this study was conducted in cancer cells, and in mice, in a laboratory setting. The researchers did not give vitamin C to human beings. The study concluded that vitamin C reduced the effectiveness of anticancer drugs in laboratory cell cultures and in mice with implanted cancer cells. Though the researchers said that their findings could have implications for human beings treated with anticancer drugs, they also added that this needs to be tested in a proper clinical trial."

DID YOU KNOW...? Vitamin C, like other essential vitamins, is crucial for the maintenance of health. **The National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) showed that more than one in five British adults has an intake of vitamin C below the Reference Nutrient Intake (RNI). A supplement containing vitamin C in recommended amounts can help to make good this dietary gap. Supplements are not intended for the medical treatment of, or as adjuncts to, medical treatment in serious conditions like cancer. They are intended to be used in the maintenance of good health.**

¹ Heaney M et al. Vitamin C antagonizes the cytotoxic effects of antineoplastic drugs. Cancer Research 2008;Oct 1, 2008; 68 (19)

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