



THE HEALTH SUPPLEMENTS INFORMATION SERVICE COMMENTS ON THE ROLE OF ANTIOXIDANTS IN THE PREVENTION OF MORTALITY IN HEALTHY PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WITH DISEASE

15th April 2008 – In response to a systematic review paper¹ regarding antioxidant supplements, published by the Cochrane collaboration, the Health Supplements Information Service (HSIS) would like to comment.

Pamela Mason, nutritionist and spokesperson for HSIS says: “Antioxidant vitamins, including these noted in this Cochrane review are essential for health and UK national dietary surveys have shown that some people have poor intakes of such nutrients.

“What is important about this review is that it **demonstrates nothing new whatsoever.** Moreover, this review was published **last year** in the Journal of the American Medical Association.² Trials using antioxidant supplements have shown inconsistent findings and yet another review or meta-analysis is not going to tell us anything at this stage that we don’t already know. Moreover, this review like several others, has included data from healthy and **sick people.**”

“Antioxidant vitamins, like any other vitamins were never intended for the prevention of chronic disease and mortality. They are intended for health maintenance on the basis of their various physiological roles in the body and in the case of the antioxidant vitamins, this does, in appropriate amounts, include a protective antioxidant effect in the body’s tissues.”

“What we need now, I am afraid, is yet further research, looking at the role of antioxidant vitamins in different groups of people, at different stages of life and throughout life, and possibly also in different mixtures and amounts.”

Pamela adds: “However, what we do know is that these vitamins are essential for health and that many people in the UK do not have an adequate intake

according to recommended daily amounts. A vitamin supplement taken in recommended amounts can be beneficial for health, especially for those people whose intakes are poor.”

- ENDS -

1. Bjelakovic G, Nikolova D, Gluud LL, Simonetti RG, Gluud C. Antioxidant supplements for prevention of mortality in healthy participants and patients with various diseases. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2008, Issue 2. Art. No.: CD007176. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD007176.
2. [Bjelakovic G](#), [Nikolova D](#), [Gluud LL](#), [Simonetti RG](#), [Gluud C](#). Mortality in randomized trials of antioxidant supplements for primary and secondary prevention: systematic review and meta-analysis. [JAMA](#). 2007 Feb 28;297(8):842-57.

For further information please contact:

Nicky Smith, Nexus Healthcare 020 0528850/ 07867 513 361
Eva Levin, Nexus Healthcare 0207 0528853