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Vitamin C – "Ascorbic acid"

Vitamin not only works as a strong antioxidant but also protects other antioxidants like vitamin E - neutralizes potentially harmful reactions in the watery parts of the body, such as the blood and the fluid inside and surrounding cells - thus strengthens many parts of the body, such as muscles & blood vessels. Vitamin C is an essential part of life.

Vitamin C has multiple functions as either a coenzyme or cofactor.

Vitamin C's antioxidant activity may be helpful in the prevention of some cancers and cardiovascular disease.

Citrus bioflavonoids work synergistically with vitamin C, maximizing its benefit by inhibiting its breakdown in the body.

Bioflavonoids, a large class of antioxidants, are most effective when taken with vitamin C.

Vitamin C is essential for the oxidation of phenylalanine and tyrosine, the conversion of folacin to tetrahydrofolic acid.

Vitamin C may modulate prostaglandin synthesis to favor the production of eicosanoids with antithrombotic and vasodilatory activity.

Vitamin C is required for synthesis of dopamine, noradrenaline and adrenaline in the nervous system or in the adrenal glands.

Vitamin C is also needed to synthesise carnitine, important in the transfer of energy to the cell mitochondria.

Ascorbic acid is required for collagen synthesis and has a structural role in bone, cartilage and teeth.

Vitamin C – “Ascorbic acid” is a relatively fragile molecule and mostly lost from foods during preparation, cooking, and/or storage.

Vitamin C is water soluble and is regularly excreted by the body.

Ascorbic acid is easily destroyed by oxidation, particularly in the presence of heat and alkalinity, and because it is highly soluble in water, it is often discarded in cooking water.

Although the vitamin occurs in small amounts in animal tissues (meats products), it is usually destroyed either by exposure to air or by processing before it reaches the feed pan.

Vitamin C plays a vital role in the formation of collagen - “Collagen” is a protein needed to develop and maintain healthy teeth, bones, gums, cartilage, vertebrae discs, joint linings, skin, blood vessels and healing wounds.

Vitamin C and immune system.

Vitamin C may be useful as an immune stimulator and modulator in some circumstances. Vitamin C promotes resistance to infection through the immunologic activity of leukocytes, the production of interferon, and the process of inflammatory reaction, or the integrity of the mucous membranes. Vitamin C stimulates the immune system.

Through this function, along with its antioxidant function, it may help in the prevention and treatment of infections and other diseases.

Other functions of vitamin C.

Reduce sorbitol in eyes, nerves, and kidneys in diabetes patients.

Vitamin C has been reported to reduce activity of the enzyme, “aldose reductase”.

Aldose reductase is the enzyme responsible for accumulation of sorbitol in eyes, nerves, and kidneys in diabetes.

Vitamin C levels in the eye decrease with age and that supplementing with vitamin C prevents this decrease, possibly leading to a lower risk of developing cataracts.

Correct the white blood cell function.

Vitamin C may be helpful in chronic diseases characterized by oxidative damage to biological molecules and play a role in white blood cell function.

Sources of vitamin C (ascorbic acid).

Note! - the body does not produce vitamin C.

It must be obtained through the diet and/or in the form of supplements.

Rich in vitamin C food items:

Sweet green and Red peppers.

Citrus fruits oranges, lemons, limes, tangerines and juices.

Fruits - papaya, mango, pine apple.

Strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, cranberries, Indian gooseberry tomatoes, turnip, sweet and white potatoes (with skin).

Melons (water melon) and cantaloupe (spanspek).

Leafy greens, spinach, cabbage, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower (cooked or raw).

Pumpkins and winter squash

Commercial supplement - Ascorbic acid and its sodium, potassium, and calcium salts are commonly used as antioxidant food additives.

Vitamin C (ascorbic acid) deficiency.

Vitamin C deficiency results in an under-hydroxylation of proline and lysine in collagen which results in a lower melting temperature of the resulting collagen fibers which causes a breakdown of the protein collagen needed for connective tissue, bones and dentin, the major portion of teeth.

Pregnancy, breastfeeding, gastrointestinal diseases, and hyperthyroidism increase the need for vitamin C. Other vitamin C deficiency symptoms include general weakness, fluid retention, depression and anemia.

Vitamin C deficiency can also cause slower wound-healing, increased susceptibility to infections, male infertility and increased genetic damage to sperm cells, which may lead to birth defects.

A lack of vitamin C leads eventually to scurvy.

Scurvy is a condition caused by a lack of vitamin C (ascorbic acid) in the diet. Signs of scurvy include tiredness, muscle weakness, joint and muscle aches, a rash on the legs, and bleeding gums.

In the past, scurvy was common among sailors and other people deprived of fresh fruits and vegetables for long periods of time.

The disease was especially prevalent in seamen on long sea voyages during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries who primarily ate nonperishable foods that lacked this essential vitamin.

Vitamin C (ascorbic acid) overdose, toxicity, side effects.

Vitamin C is water soluble and is regularly excreted by the body.

While vitamin C is generally non-toxic, however, in high doses can cause d nausea, diarrhea, gas, or stomach upset - may increase the risk of developing kidney stones.

Intake of large amounts of vitamin C can deplete the body of copper, an essential nutrient.

Vitamin C increases the absorption of iron.