

VENICE PLASTIC SURGERY

A.E. HAAS, M.D.

Cosmetic, Reconstructive, Face, Breast, and Hand Surgery

Vitamins

Vitamin C is water soluble. It was discovered by King and by Szent-Gyorgy about 1930. It is found in watery fruits and vegetables as citrus fruits, strawberries, broccoli, asparagus, brussels sprouts and papaya. Rose hips and green peppers are good sources as well. Meats have little if any usable amounts of this vitamin.

The chemical name is ascorbic acid or simply ascorbate. Its main function is to help wounds heal faster and stronger. Also there are some hormones that need vitamin C for their synthesis or production. Some of these work in the nervous system and others in the bloodstream. There is an antioxidant function that helps in the prevention of cancer and may help prevent cataract development. There is a little evidence that vitamin C may help prevent the common cold but most scientific investigations do not support this benefit. It does help with the absorption of iron and may aid the function of another vitamin known as folate or folic acid.

The most common problem with a deficiency of vitamin C is a disease known as scurvy. There is a loss of appetite, fatigue, bleeding gums and retarded and poor strength of wound healing. Teeth may loosen and decay. Joints are painful and hair follicles become hyperkeratotic. People bruise very easy. There are also psychological abnormalities. The good news is that the deficiency is rare. There must be a lacking for months if not years of malnourishment. Most susceptible are alcoholics, drug abusers and those with certain cancers and diabetes.

Because it is water soluble it is hard to build up excessive levels in your body. The more you consume the more you excrete out in the urine. This is only true to a point. Consuming more than 2 to 4 grams a day may be toxic. People with iron metabolism problems may get iron toxicity. Diarrhea may occur, kidney stones may form. Vitamin C interferes with the absorption of vitamin B 12. Once again, an appropriate amount is good but a lot is not.

As with taking any other vitamin supplement you should check with your doctor before consuming extra vitamin C. This is especially important if you plan on taking large amounts of the nutrient. If you do not require extra vitamins why take them and waist your money?

**The above represents the opinion of A. E. Haas, M.D.
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Just call us directly. No referral needed unless required by your insurance company

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