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**Dietary Supplements 3**

**Joe**

**This is Health Matters, wrapping up our report on dietary supplements.**

**Kristen**

**Synthetic vitamins produced from scratch in the laboratory are isolated concentrated substances. Which is why the claim is made that synthetic vitamins act more like drugs. And that synthetic vitamins have the potential to disrupt body chemistry and cause imbalances.**

**Taushona**

**Also, some synthetic vitamins don’t work as hoped. For example, beta carotene (BAIT-a CARROT-teen ) has been promoted as a lung cancer preventative for smokers. But when synthetic beta carotene was given to smoker test subjects, the supplement actually increased their cancer risk. While natural forms of beta carotene found in fruits and vegetables proved protective.**

**Joe**

**Another example comes from treating prisoners of war in Korea who had beriberi (berry-berry) – a condition caused by a vitamin B deficiency. The prisoners were given a synthetic vitamin B1 derived from coal tar. The vitamin did not cure the prisoners. But rice polishings did cure them. Because rice polishings contain a natural vitamin B complex.**

**Kristen**

**But you can’t conclude from the study that natural sources of the vitamin B complex are the only way to go. Individual B vitamin supplements are sometimes necessary. For example, vitamin B12, found only in animal products, is essential to fertility and nerve functioning. As a result, vegetarians are urged to take vitamin B12 supplements.**

**Taushona**

**And vitamin B6 has proven to be highly effective in preventing blindness in diabetics.**

**Joe**

**Other conditions benefit from Vitamin B6 supplements. Vitamin B6 deficiencies are widespread in the U.S.. And are linked to heart disease, nervous disorders, carpel tunnel syndrome, PMS, morning sickness, kidney failure, alcoholism, asthma and cancer. Part of the problem is that a B6 deficiency leads to other deficiencies of the B complex family.**

**Kristen**

**Another part of the problem is that natural sources of vitamin B6 are limited to raw milk, raw meat, raw cheese and fish. Raw dairy is hard to come by. And raw meat and fish are rare to non-existent in the average diet. So it’s easy to see why there’s a widespread deficiency of vitamin B6. And why you should follow doctor’s orders when it comes to taking vitamin B6 supplements.**

**Taushona**

**To date, seventeen water-soluble B vitamins have been discovered in different proportions in different foods. How these vitamins work together is complicated. As is the manner in which individual B vitamins work.**

**Joe**

**Vitamin D is another complex vitamin-- with as many as twelve components, several of which are active. Which may explain why synthetic vitamin D has been linked to allergic reactions and to hyperactivity and coronary heart disease.**

**Kristen**

**The more that is discovered about vitamins and micronutrients, the clearer it has become that vitamins depend on numerous co-factors that enable us to digest and assimilate them. So, while it’s true that certain isolated vitamins have proven temporarily beneficial for many disease conditions, the best source for most of us is nutrient dense, whole foods.**

**Taushona**

**What about the supplements that are plant based and organic? Like the many herbal supplements that are used both nutritionally and medicinally?**

**Joe**

**Consumer Reports has found that multiple herbal products on the market contain random plant matter. And, in some cases, did not even contain the herb that was featured on the label. Some of these products came from China. It’s ironic that Chinese Medicine is a vast, ancient body of herbal healing knowledge. Yet some over-the-counter herb formulas made in China have been found to be fraudulent. And the fraud is not limited to supplements made in China.**

**Kristen**

**The good news is that science keeps refining our knowledge of body chemistry and what we need to stay healthy. Like the more recently discovered Coenzyme Q10 (co-ENZ-eyem). If you’ve never heard of it, it’s also called vitamin Q – a nutrient that every cell in the body must have to produce energy. Coenzyme Q10 has been particularly effective in treating cardiovascular disease and periodontal problems. Since cholesterol-lowering drugs interfere with absorption of coenzyme Q10, this is something to discuss with your doctor.**

**Taushona**

**And that’s the bottom line. You may need supplements. Some of us do. And the most reliable source for that information is your doctor. Otherwise, you have to wade through a lot of marketing hype.**

**Joe**

**Health Matters is a production of KIDE Hoopa CA.  Produced and written by Cynthia Poten. Engineered by Joseph Orozco.  Our readers were Kristen Marshall, Taushona Moon and Joseph Orozco.  For this audio and more information, visit our download area at  www.kidefm.org. Thank you for listening. Your health adds to the health of our community.**

**Sources and Links**

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