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Why Whole Food Concentrates are Superior to Synthetic Nutrients

By Keith Post, ND

Many people take some sort of commercially produced Multi Vitamin-Mineral Complex on a daily basis assuming that all of their nutritional deficiencies will thereby be covered, regardless of what their diet or other lifestyle factors may consist of. The only problem with this approach is that most of these individual vitamin components are made by one of maybe five giant multinational pharmaceutical giants and then the powdered chemicals are packaged according to specification by any of hundreds of smaller companies. These powdered chemicals are not as found in nature and the body treats them as foreign substances, trying to rid itself of them as soon as possible. That is why your urine turns a bright yellow soon after taking any multiple vitamin or B complex containing riboflavin, for example. By the way, this chemical, which is the synthetic form of Vitamin B2 is also used commercially as a food coloring…yummy?

The good news is that synthetic vitamins usually have a much lower potential of toxicity or damage than do many of the more powerful drugs being prescribed today. The bad news is that synthetic vitamins often do not cure the deficiencies that a natural food source of those vitamins would.

One famous example of this is the breakdown of connective tissues leading to capillary fragility and easy bleeding known as scurvy. Commercial Vitamin C or ascorbic acid is actually only one component of the whole Vitamin C complex and will not prevent scurvy. Foods containing the entire natural vitamin C complex will.

In days gone by, sailors bound on long voyages would often become victims of scurvy. However, sometime during the 18th century the British Royal Navy discovered that having limes or lemons available on board would prevent this disease, hence the nickname “limeys” for British sailors. In like fashion, sauerkraut, which is also a good source of the Vitamin C complex, was perhaps the reason that German soldiers were referred to as “krauts” during the World War II.

All of the citrus fruits are good sources of the Vitamin C complex. These include: citrons, grapfruits, kumquats, lemons, limes, mandarins, oranges, tangelos, tangerines and others, which are less well-known. Other non-citrus fruits, which are also good sources of Vitamin C include: gooseberreies, guava, papaya, strawberries and tomatoes. The C complex is also plentiful in some vegetables, such as alfalfa, bell peppers, broccoli, buckwheat leaf, cabbage, mushrooms, paprika, some pickles, potatoes and spinach. The Indian gooseberry (*Emblica officinalis*), which is usually referred to as Amla or Amalaka in India, is a particularly high source of the Vitamin C complex, as is the Camu camu fruit (*Myrciaria dubia*), which is indigenous to the Amazon rainforest basin.

In the case of the B Complex, the situation becomes even more ridiculous. Farmers, who breed foxes and other creatures for their fur, know that the synthetic vitamin formulas cannot come

close to natural food sources of the B vitamins as a source of nutrition. One famous study, performed in 1940, used two groups of silver foxes as test subjects. The first group of foxes had their diets supplemented with the addition of synthetic B vitamins. This resulted in poor growth, inferior fur quality and a decreased lifespan. In contrast, the second group of foxes was fed a diet supplemented with nutritional yeast, an excellent source of all of the B Vitamins, and these foxes exhibited excellent growth, superior fur quality and a longer than average lifespan. In other animal studies using rats or pigs, thiamine or synthetic Vitamin B1 has been proven to be the equivalent of a genetic poison, as it led to sterility in the female animals, as early as the second generation.

As for humans, a retrospective study published by the University of Florida in 1981 found that the average sperm count for American men was then 1/5th of what it had been in 1929. I wonder what the discrepancy might be today! By analyzing their data, it has been pointed out by nutritional authorities that the decline began to be most pronounced during the onset of World War II in 1939. It was at this time that white bread, which is already virtually devoid of any nutritional value, was mandated by the government to be “enriched” with synthetic B vitamins. Cause or coincidence? You decide. In any case, I am advising all of my male patients with any concerns about their ability to reproduce or decreasing virility to eat only whole grains and avoid all processed grains.

Have you ever wondered why there is never an entry for Vitamin B4 on any nutritional label? This is simply because the chemists have never discovered a method whereby they are able to manufacture it in the laboratory. In nature, B4 is always found attached to B1 and can only be derived from whole food sources such as nutritional yeast, rice husks or whole grains, for example. Does that mean that B4 is not important to our health? Absolutely not! B4 has been called the “anti-stiffness factor” and without it, we would be subject to potentially life-threatening cardiac ailments such as arrhythmias, atrial fibrillations or ventricular fibrillations, most notably.

In recent times, it has been claimed that what Royal Lee and other medical researchers referred to in the past as B4 is actually a purine nucleobase called adenine, rather than an actual vitamin, but I am not convinced that this is true. In any case, the B complex is best obtained from whole food sources such as: nutritional yeast, rice husks (this is what is removed from white rice), whole grains, wheat germ, millet, liver and other organ meats. Other foods, which also have a significant amount of the B complex include: legumes (especially lentils and peanuts), nuts, seeds, egg yolks and fish.

The body is a living organism that makes a decision about anything taken by mouth. Either it is a natural substance such as food or botanicals or it is synthetic. The body will integrate whatever it finds useful from natural substances into repairing and regenerating new healthy tissues. Anything synthetic, however, the body will strive to divest itself as quickly and efficiently as possible. So, people that use multiple vitamin formulas on a regular basis do get some relief from their symptoms, similar to drug therapy. However, as soon as the liver, kidneys and bowels clear these synthetic creations, they are back to square one.

Medical scientists have done enough testing to know what the average clearance rate for a particular drug will usually be before it is eliminated from the body and therefore no longer effective. So, in clinical practice, dosages are usually given in such an amount and frequency that a target amount of drug is in circulation at all times despite the constant elimination. And, due to their decreased internal organ function, the elderly, immune-compromised or hypofunctioning liver patients may sometimes be put on higher dosages than more vital patients

would be. It could easily be argued that these are exactly the types of patients that should not be given higher doses of any drug.

Adverse drug reactions occur either when the dose is higher than the body can tolerate or because the drug actually causes the symptoms that it is intended to control. There can also be allergic reactions to many of these substances. Any reactions to whole food-based nutritional supplements are rare and, if they do occur, will be much milder and are never life threatening as drugs have the potential to be.

Which path do you choose?