

Vitamins and Dietary Supplements

Several years ago, one of my patients told me an interesting story. She said that the vitamins and dietary supplements I recommended for her were expensive. She was retired, on a limited income and her dietary supplements cost almost \$150. I knew that there had to be a way that my patients could get their supplements at a price they could afford.



So I decided that ALT-MED Medical and Physical Therapy would offer a variety of quality vitamins and supplements, to our patients, at 30-70% below retail.



Medical research increasingly supports the use of specific dietary supplements. It is now apparent that we do not get all that we need from our food...even if we eat well. Supplementation is necessary for health and vitality, especially with increased stress and age.

I personally take a number of dietary supplements, including fish oil, vitamin E and a good multivitamin. At different times of the year, I will add other supplements like vitamin D, ginseng and astragalus, as needed.

I generally recommend NOW Foods products because of quality, cost and freshness (I have no financial interest in any supplement manufacturer).



I have included several of my articles, from the Daily Herald, on the benefit of vitamins and supplements.

For your convenience, we can ship them to your home or office.

**In today's world, vitamins and dietary supplements
are necessary for optimal health**



GINGER MAY HELP TO REDUCE ARTHRITIS KNEE PAIN

Alternative Approach, Daily Herald, 3/15/04

By Patrick B. Massey MD, PhD

Knee pain from arthritis is one of the most common medical problems in the US today. Treatment options include pain medications, knee injections, physical therapy and surgery.

As we continue to age, there will be an increased demand for good pain relief. However, rising medical costs may ultimately limit access to newer medications, physical therapy and invasive procedures.

Inexpensive and safe dietary supplements such as glucosamine, chondroitin and methyl-sulfonyl-methane (MSM) have been shown to reduce the pain associated with osteoarthritis. A common spice - ginger - may soon be added to that list. In a recent study in the journal *OsteoArthritis and Cartilage*, ginger was shown to be effective in reducing arthritis-related knee pain and increasing function.

Ginger comes from the root of the plant *Zingiber officinale*. It has been used as a spice, condiment and medicine for more than 2,500 years. Today, ginger is available as a spice, raw, pickled and in a capsule form at grocery and health food stores.

The active ingredient in ginger is an oil called gingerol. It accounts for the aroma as well as the therapeutic properties.

Historically, ginger has been used as a treatment for the nausea associated with motion sickness and following surgery. It also reduces platelet stickiness, but only at very high doses (more than 10 grams a day).

Twenty-nine patients with osteoarthritis of the knee were enrolled in a double blinded, crossover study. Some of the patients took 1 gram of ginger a day. The study authors followed levels of pain, function and swelling of the knee. Only the patients taking ginger had a reduction in pain and knee swelling. They also had a significant increase in knee function.

These results go beyond simply reducing pain. Patients whose knees hurt are often limited in their ability to exercise. The sedentary lifestyle associated with knee pain can lead to serious, life threatening conditions such as heart disease, cancer, obesity, diabetes and high blood pressure.

Ginger is not without potential side effects. Pharmacological studies suggest that very large doses (more than 10 grams a day) might lead to sleepiness or cardiac arrhythmias. Ginger should not be used for morning sickness during pregnancy because it may cause premature labor. Daily consumption of high doses of ginger root may also interfere with the absorption of iron and fat-soluble vitamins and affect blood levels of a number of medications such as digoxin, isoniazid, dilantin, coumadin and some antidepressants.

But since ginger is inexpensive and, at lower doses, has few side effects, its potential to relieve knee pain



More good reasons to pile on the cranberries

Alternative Approach, Daily Herald, 11/21/05

By Patrick B. Massey MD, PhD

This time of the year is rich with holidays, each with its own specific food and plant decorations. For example, where would we be at Thanksgiving without the cranberry? Did you know that the cranberry has been used both as a food and as a medicine by Native Americans for centuries? Modern medical research on the medical benefits of cranberry agrees.

The American cranberry (*Vaccinium macrocarpon*), grows wild in the United States and goes by many names including bear berry, black cranberry, bog cranberry, moosebeere, large cranberry, low cranberry, marsh apple, mountain cranberry and others. It is closely related to the blueberry and bilberry. Cranberries are an excellent food source for antioxidants and vitamins as well as very effective for treating and preventing urinary tract infections (UTI).

Medical research on the cranberry dates back to the late 1840's. It was discovered, by German physicians, that it was effective at treating and preventing infections of the urinary tract. Cranberry has the ability to slightly acidify the urine and it was believed, until recently, that this was the mechanism by which cranberries prevented UTI.

Research over the past decade has revealed that cranberries do more than simply acidify the urine. Compounds in cranberry actually prevent the binding of bacteria to the wall of the urinary bladder, a necessary step for infection of the urinary tract.

Although the definitive research in this area has not been done, most of the research demonstrates that cranberry consumption is beneficial in preventing UTI in those who are greatest risk, especially the elderly. I have found it to be well tolerated and very effective if used, daily, for more than 2-3 months. Some research suggests that when cranberry is used together with antibiotics, it may be more effective than antibiotics alone. However, there is no evidence that cranberry alone is effective in treating an ongoing UTI.

One recent study showed that cranberry also prevents the binding of disease-causing viruses to the walls of the intestine. Other claims that cranberry is effective against fungi, atherosclerosis, cancer, gall stones, diabetes, kidney stones and scurvy are not supported by reasonable medical studies.

There are no significant contraindications for cranberry use. It may actually increase the absorption of vitamin B₁₂ in patients using stomach acid reducing medications.

The most common form of cranberry is as a juice. Studies using cranberry juice recommend about 300 ml/day (10oz). However, most cranberry juices contain a lot of sugar and may not be optimal for diabetics. Cranberry capsules, 300-1200 mg/day is common, taken between meals.

Cranberry is very safe and even high doses of cranberry juice, 3-4 liters/day have no toxicity in adults (may cause diarrhea). For children, I recommend talking with a physician familiar with cranberry, since toxicities at high doses have been reported. Those with allergies to blueberries and cranberries obviously should avoid them.



Mitochondrial failure? Taking a multivitamin may help

Alternative Approach, Daily Herald, 12/19/05

By Patrick B. Massey MD, PhD

It is a common belief in the medical community that supplemental vitamins and minerals are not necessary. You get all you need from your food and anything extra ends up in the urine, the thinking goes. This belief persists because there are only a few diseases that are caused by a profound vitamin deficiency. However, what about chronic diseases? What if low levels of vitamins contribute to chronic illness and even aging?

Although we know that minimum levels of vitamins are needed to prevent diseases like scurvy, surprisingly limited research has been done on the health-related effects of low vitamin levels. However, one recent study in the medical journal *Molecular Aspects of Medicine* suggests optimal levels of vitamins might boost metabolism and improve health, especially in those at risk of having lower levels of vitamins — the elderly, poor and chronically ill.

The key, the researchers said, might be how mitochondria function. Mitochondria are among the "organs" of the cell. They are very complex and even have their own DNA. Mitochondria are the power plants of the cell. They make the energy that a cell lives on. They also help to protect the cell from oxidation damage. Low levels of vitamins and minerals, in mitochondria, inhibit a number of metabolic processes involved in the production of energy. This accelerates DNA damage, cell aging and even cell death.

As we age, mitochondria naturally begin to fail and, as a result, the cell ultimately dies. If mitochondria do not have the proper amounts of minerals and vitamins, they begin to fail at a much earlier age, resulting in premature cell death. Premature cell death might not result in a specific disease, but it might contribute to chronic disease, increased susceptibility to illness and premature aging.

Even though we are living longer than our parents (77 years for the average American), we have significantly more chronic disease. Considering that between 10 percent and 25 percent of "healthy" young Americans do not get the proper amounts of vitamins and minerals, mitochondrial failure could be contributing to our overall poor health.

Will a multivitamin help? The answer is yes. Although there is little evidence that vitamins reverse complex and serious conditions like heart disease and cancer, regular use of multivitamins might prevent mitochondrial death, promote healthy cells, slow the aging process and make the body, on the whole, more resistant to disease.

Not all multivitamins are the same. Some makers have higher manufacturing standards. Liquid vitamins might be absorbed faster, but there is no data to say that they are better than capsules or tablets. Check for expiration dates and the USP (United States Pharmacopeia) or GMP (Good Manufacturing Practices) symbol on the bottle. These are indicators of quality manufacturers. And put the vitamins where you'll remember to take them daily.

Price List

Description	ALT-MED Price	Suggested Retail Price
Astragalus 500 mg	\$5.00	\$6.00
Black Cohosh 80 mg	\$8.00	\$11.00
Calcium+Magnesium (VitD, Zinc)	\$15.00	\$20.00
CoQ10 400mg	\$60.00	\$119.00
CoQ10 50mg Twinpack	\$25.00	\$35.00
Curcumin 665 mg	\$8.00	\$15.00
Curaderm Skin Cream	\$20.00	\$40.00
Eleuthero(Siberian Ginseng) 500 mg	\$4.00	\$7.00
Gamma E Advanced (Vit E) 400 IU	\$8.00	\$13.00
Ginger Root 550mg	\$4.00	\$6.00
Glucosamine Sulfate 750mg	\$8.00	\$11.00
Gr8 Dophilus (Probiotic) 4 billion	\$9.00	\$15.00
Hyaluronic Acid	\$15.00	\$20.00
Kava Kava 450 mg	\$10.00	\$14.00
Licorice Root 450 mg	\$4.00	\$6.00
Maitke Mushroom 60 mg	\$10.00	\$16.00
Marshmallow Root 450 mg	\$4.00	\$7.00
Omega 3 1000mg (200caps)	\$10.00	\$13.00
Panax Ginseng 520 mg	\$7.00	\$11.00
Progesterone Cream	\$12.00	\$20.00
Red Yeast Rice 600 mg	\$10.00	\$15.00
Reishi Mushrooms 270 mg	\$8.00	\$12.00
Silymarin (Milk Thistle) 150 mg	\$10.00	\$16.00
Ultra Preventative III-Multivitamin	\$40.00	\$60.00
Vit-Min 75+ Iron Free Multivitamin	\$25.00	\$37.00
Vitamin D, 1000 IU	\$5.00	\$10.00