

# **Vitamin C Health Benefits: Sources, Side Effects, & Dosage**

Vitamin C is an essential nutrient for a healthy, happy body. Its importance was discovered and lost many times throughout history, and it wasn't until the 1700s that its benefits were officially trialed and documented. The truth is: the human body cannot survive without a daily, regular intake of vitamin C.

So, why is vitamin C important? There are a few reasons.

## **Vitamin C for Healthy, Youthful Skin**

Skin contains significant quantities of vitamin C that are present because of their absorption from dietary sources. Strong, healthy skin requires high levels to promote collagen production — a structural protein which helps to create soft, pliable skin that's resilient to wrinkling.

Without adequate vitamin C, collagen production is impaired and soft tissues such as skin begin to break down.

Vitamin C's activity as an antioxidant also helps to prevent the signs of aging caused by exposure to UV light.

## **Vitamin C for a Healthy Heart**

The modern world imparts many stresses on our human biology, none of which are more predominant than our heart health. With every evolving diet and lifestyle factor, your heart health has never been more vulnerable.

To keep your heart healthy and mitigate your risk of cardiovascular diseases, regular dietary sources of antioxidants such as vitamin C are recommended.

Daily intake of vitamin C resulting in an increase in blood plasma concentration has been linked to improvements in lipid profiles, arterial stiffness, and endothelial function. This remains a highly active area of research with the direct effects of supplementation still being investigated. What has been

concluded is that a deficiency of vitamin C is associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular mortality.

## **Vitamin C for Wound Healing**

Adequate levels of vitamin C are essential to efficient and healthy wound healing. When soft tissues are damaged, the healing process calls upon available reserves of vitamin C as ascorbic acid to facilitate repair and re-epithelization. Every distinct stage of soft tissue repair requires persistent levels of vitamin C. During and after healing, blood serum and tissue levels of vitamin C diminish and therefore dietary supplementation may help provide better outcomes.

If your skin is slow to heal or is prone to scar tissue abnormalities, review your diet for adequate sources of vitamin C.

## **Vitamin C for Bone Maintenance**

Scurvy is the classical presentation of vitamin C deficiency with bone pain being a commonly associated symptom. Deficiency in vitamin C has since been deeply studied and conclusions show that below healthy levels are directly linked to spontaneous fracturing, impaired bone growth, and impaired bone healing. Symptoms which can commonly be described as osteoporosis, a condition of reduced bone strength. Although calcium is often the mineral associated with healthy bone density, it's clear vitamin C is just as important.

## **Vitamin C for Healthy Joints**

Vitamin C is heavily involved in the formation of all soft tissues — especially those that support and mobilize joints — including cartilage, tendons, and ligaments. Consistent dietary intake of vitamin C contribute towards lifelong joint health. Recent studies also show vitamin C may help prevent and reverse painful joint conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, an autoimmune disease characterized by the damage and inflammation of your joints.

Studies show that the pathology of rheumatoid arthritis is defined by biology

shifts towards oxidation, a reaction that causes aging and degradation. Vitamin C can help to reverse this reaction and therefore decrease the inflammation and tissue damage associated with joint conditions like rheumatoid arthritis.

## **How to Incorporate Vitamin C into Your Diet**

Now you know just how important vitamin C is for the health of your body, you may be wondering exactly how to find it in your diet and exactly how much of it you should be eating. Advice from the U.S. Food and Nutrition Board of the Institute of Medicine currently recommends women to ingest 75 mg per day and men to consume 90 mg per day. These are considered the daily minimum for consumption and if you consider yourself at risk, supplementation with 500 - 1,000 mg per day should be considered in line with medical consultation.

To find vitamin C in your diet, be sure to incorporate some of the most common food sources:

- Yellow bell peppers - 341mg
- Guava fruit - 125mg
- Kale and other green-leafed vegetables - 80 mg per cup
- Kiwi - 64mg
- Broccoli - 81mg per cup
- Oranges - 70mg
- Tomatoes - 28mg
- Camel milk - three times higher vitamin C content than cow milk

How does your diet stack up? How many sources of vitamin C can you count?