So How Much Vitamin C Do We Really Need?

The reevaluation of a watershed study finds that people require more vitamin C than WHO guidelines previously recommended.

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In 1944, researchers at the Sorby Research Institute in Sheffield, England, launched a study to pinpoint the minimal amount of vitamin C needed to prevent scurvy. Following the inquiry, the World Health Organization (WHO) partially based its recommended daily intake of the vitamin—45 milligrams—on the results of this study. However, after reevaluating data from the initial investigation, scientists' findings confirmed that at least twice that dose of vitamin C is needed for maximum healing power, reports News-Medical.net. (Cases of scurvy are now rare thanks to modern diets.)

For the study, researchers Philippe Hujoel, PhD, DDS, at the University of Washington, and Margaux L.A. Hujoel, a postdoctoral fellow at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, reassessed findings from the Sorby inquiry using scientific techniques unavailable at that time.

Results showed that 95 mg of vitamin C is required to help generate scar tissue and promote the healing of wounds for 97.5% of people. (The formation of scar tissues relies on the production of collagen, which in turn depends on vitamin C.)

"It is concluded that the failure to reevaluate the data of a landmark trial with novel statistical methods as they become available may have led to a misleading narrative on the vitamin C needs for the prevention and treatment of collagen-related pathologies," wrote the scientists.

The researchers also learned that it takes individuals a long time to recover from a vitamin C deficiency and that saturation with high levels of the nutrient are needed for skin repair and maintenance of the structural health of blood vessel walls.

Additional studies conducted by scientists worldwide have also supported a higher intake of vitamin C than the daily allowance initially recommended by the WHO.

To learn more about which foods are rich in vitamin C, read "C Ya."

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