

What supplements I take ... and why

I've been lecturing for the past fifteen years at many corporations and organizations on a variety of health topics. The one question that seems to always be asked is "what supplements do you take?" So I thought I would give you some general guidelines to vitamin supplementation and the reasons why. As I began my research I was reading a nutrition journal and saw a professor of mine had recently published a similar article. His name is Dr. David Seaman, DC, MS, DABCN, FACC, and his nutritional beliefs and supplementation regimen are very similar to my own, so I will share with you his article.

First, I should indicate that very little information suggests that a given disease entity can be treated with a supplement, which then leads to a subsequent cure. Those of us living in the United States and other industrialized nations are dying from chronic degenerative and inflammatory diseases, and drugs don't cure degenerative diseases, and neither do supplements. Degenerative diseases are driven by inappropriate lifestyles, which are typically associated with poor dietary habits and inadequate levels of exercise. Everyone should endeavor to eat properly and exercise every day; and there are several appropriate supplements that support this effort.

I take a multivitamin/mineral, magnesium/calcium, EPA/DHA, coenzyme Q10, anti-inflammatory herbs (ginger, turmeric, etc.), vitamin D, acetyl-L-carnitine,

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lipic acid, glucosamine/chondroitin, and probiotics. A brief explanation for why I take these follows:

- **Multivitamins/minerals** are recommended by many researchers and toxicologists. This is because they are thought to help prevent the development of degenerative disease. Multivitamin/mineral supplements typically contain all the key nutrients that we get from food.

- **Magnesium** is required for over 300 metabolic reactions. Research suggests that when we become deficient in magnesium, we destabilize the immune and nervous systems, which can lead to inflammation and nervous system hyper-excitability. Numerous diseases have been associated with magnesium deficiency, such as heart disease, syndrome X, type 2 diabetes, and migraine headaches. I take 400-1000 mg, in addition to what is in my multivitamin.

- **EPA/DHA** from fish oil reduces inflammation and is thought to help prevent and treat numerous diseases, such as cancer, heart disease, inflammatory bowel disease, and inflammatory joint disease. Supplementation has been shown to reduce the levels of inflammatory mediators,

such as prostaglandins, leukotrienes, thromboxanes, growth factors, and cytokines. I take 1-3 grams per day.

- **Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10)** has become very popular in recent years. CoQ10 functions primarily to produce ATP (adenosine triphosphate), reduce free radicals, and to regulate skeletal muscle gene expression. Nearly every disease studied has been shown to be associated with a reduction in ATP and an increase in free radicals, so I take at least 100 mg per day.

- **Ginger, turmeric, and other botanicals/herbs/spices** function like a natural version of drugs like Advil and Celebrex, without any of the side effects. Spices have been shown to reduce NF-kB, cyclooxygenase, and lipoxygenase, which help to reduce inflammation. I take 1-2 grams per day.

- **Garlic** is perhaps the most well known herb for reducing inflammation. It is most noted for its heart benefits; and what readers should know is that these benefits are due to garlic's anti-inflammatory activities. I supplement with garlic to achieve at least 5 mg of allicin per day.

- **Vitamin D** has become the subject of much research in recent years, as it is known to have important cell-signaling functions. Numerous diseases are thought to be promoted by a deficiency in vitamin D, such as osteoporosis, heart disease, and cancer. Even musculoskeletal pain can be caused by a deficiency. I take 1000-4000 IU of vita-

min D per day.

- **Acetyl-L-carnitine** (ALCAR) and alpha-lipoic acid (ALA) have become popular supplements, due to the work of Dr. Bruce Ames. He and his colleagues have demonstrated that aging can be slowed or reversed in laboratory animals with these supplements. Ames suggests that humans take 1000 mg of ALCAR and 400 mg of ALA per day, in divided doses, which is what I take. The combination of these substances promotes ATP synthesis and reduces free radicals.

- **Glucosamine sulfate and chondroitin sulfate** are known to be of help with osteoarthritis. Their primary effect is to help maintain proteoglycans integrity. I take 1500 mg of glucosamine and 1200 mg of chondroitin per day.

- **Probiotic supplements** typically include lactobacillus acidophilus and bifidobacterium, which have been shown to improve gut health and function. I cycle the use of probiotics during the year. I typically will take probiotics 3-6 months per year.

In addition to taking the above, I try to eat an "anti-inflammatory" diet. My hope is that the combination will allow me to live well into my eighties or nineties, and maintain the current personal and professional lifestyle I enjoy. I recently met an ex-National Institute of Health official who spent most of his career in research. He is an MD, a PhD, and is about 65 years old ... lean, healthy, and very sharp-witted. He now runs a privately funded

anti-aging research center; and he takes similar supplements to the ones I suggest, and for the same reasons outlined above.

The intriguing aspect to anti-inflammatory eating and supplementation is that, no matter if you are symptom-free or sick, the same approach should be taken. Deflaming is the goal — and those with chronic degenerative and inflammatory diseases need to be especially vigilant and committed in their efforts.

My final recommendation is a book called "The Paleo Diet," by Loren Cordain. I highly recommend it to all my readers. Now you know what supplements I take. If you would like to know what brands of vitamins are the best, please feel free to contact me at my office. There are both good and bad brands out there, so buyer beware! Becoming better educated means you won't waste your money on poor quality supplements. After all, "health literacy is the key to longevity."

Dr. James Proodian is an author, educator, and healthcare practitioner specializing in Chiropractic Rehabilitation and other natural healing techniques. He also provides free health lectures and health screenings for companies and other organizations throughout Monmouth County. All of Dr. Proodian's health articles can be found on his website at www.NaturalHealthcare-Center.com. He can also be reached at his practice, Natural Healthcare Center, at 732-222-2219.