

## Vitamin E

I was interested in finding out more about vitamin E and according to the FDA it is one of the vitamins our bodies needs the most. It is a fat-soluble antioxidant as well as involved in immune function. They help to protect cells in the body from any free radicals. They can have adverse reactions if taken in excess. If taken as recommended by FDA, in the dosage daily intake, then Vitamin E doesn't have any adverse reactions for local anesthetics/vasoconstriction precautions or effects on dental treatment. It does however have an effect on bleeding: high doses of vitamin E can increase the overall risk of bleeding. Although the mechanism is unknown, it may affect the coagulation cascade and has the potential to enhance the anticoagulation effects of various anticoagulants. The recommended daily value as per the FDA is 30 IU and it can also be consumed from our daily food intake. Some examples are from fortified cereals and juices, green vegetables (spinach and broccoli), nuts and seeds, peanut and peanut butter and vegetable oils.

Going into the pharmacy and into the vitamin aisle I was overwhelmed. Anybody going in looking for a specific vitamin can become unsure as to the dosage or brand to choose from. I went to my local pharmacy in search of vitamin E what I found was that there were 3-4 brands to choose from as well as different milligrams to choose from making it even more difficult to choose which is best for you. It's difficult on your own if not seeking some help from your medical doctor. In my research for vitamin E online I kept reading how important it is not to overdose on these vitamins because of the fear of toxicity in the body. It makes me wonder how many people must blindly go and just pick one of the vitamins and start taking them without any guidance. In my case before watching this documentary I had not realized how unsafe they can be for us.

The Frontline documentary "Supplements and Safety" explains how the vitamin, herbal and supplement companies have become successful by how much consumers spend each year. Many of these vitamins, fish oils, diet supplements can cause side effects and the reason is there can be cross contamination in the companies producing them or using ingredients besides what is on the label. It uncovers how too much of certain vitamins like for example vitamin E can cause harm to our bodies because of possible toxicity. Many of the supplements can be promoted for our cardiovascular system or losing weight but have not been proven in any clinical studies. In the documentary there are a lot of cases where people have gotten sick, had liver damage, body changing side effects as well as death. It highlights how many different companies can sell a vitamin and the consumer may end up not getting what they are paying for.

After watching the documentary, I have a new outlook on how some supplements can be dangerous to us. We think how safe they must be because they are able to be bottled and sold to the public especially in our local pharmacies, so they must be safe. They are promoted to benefit our bodies and are natural, so they must be good but in reality, some may not even have the ingredients claimed to be in them by the companies and they are not FDA approved. I never knew this before watching the documentary. I have even had my own doctor suggest vitamin D because I am deficient, so I thought they all must be safe. My doctor didn't suggest such high doses as some other companies would like you to take but it was interesting to find

that there are no regulations to these supplements. The FDA should be treating these companies like they would any other company to follow certain guidelines before being able to sell them to the public. Most medicines go through a long thorough process by the FDA and it's unfortunate how these companies can be sold without going through a similar process especially after the different incidents that have occurred on some people after taking these supplements. These companies don't need to go through any preclinical animal testing, clinical studies, submission of new drug application, FDA doesn't have to review findings and drug information or even inspect where the drug will be manufactured to then get approved.

#### References:

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