



A Balanced Diet is as Good as Loading Up on Supplements, Study Says

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We've all heard about the widely-touted benefits of antioxidants and supplements, including promises of a long, disease-free life and longer-lasting youth. But if you're popping a handful of vitamins everyday in hopes that you'll stay forever young, you might want to listen up. **A new long-term study finds that, when it comes to longevity, taking vitamin supplements is really no more helpful than eating a balanced diet.**

In this latest study, researchers used data from nearly **14,000 residents of a California retirement community over three decades, looking at vitamin intake and mortality. An analysis showed that the mortality rate among those who took vitamins was no lower than among those who didn't.** "Neither dietary nor supplemental intake of vitamin A or vitamin C nor supplemental intake of vitamin E was significantly associated with mortality," the authors write in a release.

The residents initially noted their intake of antioxidant vitamins A, C and E in the early 1980s, describing how often and how much they had, either through diet or supplements. Even when adjusting for consistency in taking supplements and the participants' lifestyle habits and existing diseases, supplements didn't make a considerable difference.

The study joins a growing body of research that has found supplements and specifically multivitamins are not useful in preventing disease and may, in some instances, add a slightly elevated risk of mortality and some cancers.

There were other limitations. The lack of association, they say, could be because 95 percent of the participants had nutrient-rich diets to begin with. According to the Mayo Clinic, those with a diet high in vitamins and nutrients from whole food sources are bad candidates for supplements. Instead, those who may have deficiencies from low-calorie diets, pregnancy or some conditions could benefit from the pills.




Whenever possible, whole foods offer benefits beyond what you can get in a pill. Besides the necessary nutrients, fruits, veggies and the like also provide your body with



things like fiber, which helps prevent diabetes and heart disease, as well as micronutrients and phytochemicals, which have a protective effect on the body.

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