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Multivitamins reduce the risk of delivering low weight children

It has been estimated that 20 million children with low birth weights are born each year, mainly in developing countries. The condition is associated with an increased risk of early mortality, poor growth and cognitive development, and chronic illness later in life. Research published in 1998 in *The Lancet*, conducted by Wafaie W. Fawzi and colleagues, revealed that multivitamin supplements given to HIV positive pregnant women reduced the risk of fetal death, low birth weight and preterm birth. In a new report appearing in the April 5, 2007 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, Dr Fawzi and his colleagues now also show that supplying multivitamin supplements to HIV negative pregnant women decreases the risk of giving birth to low weight and small-for-gestational-age infants. The study is largest of its kind to date.

The researchers, from Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Harvard gave a daily multivitamin containing vitamin B-complex, C and E, or a placebo to 84,468 HIV-negative women at 12 to 27 weeks of gestation until six weeks following delivery. All participants received folic acid and iron supplements.

While not appearing to protect against prematurity or fetal death in this study, multivitamin supplements reduced the risk of low birth weight by 18 percent and the risk of delivering an infant that was small-for-gestational-age by 23 percent compared to the placebo group. Improved maternal immunity and hemoglobin levels could explain the added nutrients' positive effects on fetal growth. "In light of these findings, we recommend that multivitamins be considered for all pregnant women in developing countries, regardless of their HIV status," Dr Fawzi stated.

A number of developing countries have a distribution system in place for iron and folate supplements to pregnant women. Dr Fawzi suggested that "Incorporating multivitamins into those supplements could be done without a large increase in cost and would be a highly cost-effective method of improving birth outcomes in developing countries."

Health Concern

HIV

Because of their disease, patients with HIV/AIDS have nutritional deficiencies, and are subject to much greater oxidative stress than healthy people. In 1985, the Life Extension Foundation was among the first organizations to propose that patients with HIV/AIDS would benefit from taking high doses of antioxidants. Since then, many scientific studies have examined a wide range of nutrients and supplements for use in HIV/AIDS.

Patients infected with HIV are frequently malnourished and deficient in antioxidants, especially glutathione (Foster HD 2004). This is especially worrisome because glutathione, an internally produced antioxidant, appears to interfere with HIV's entry into its

target cells (Markovic I et al 2004). Glutathione deficiency in patients who have HIV/AIDS can exacerbate inflammatory bowel disease, which prevents absorption of vital nutrients and may hasten wasting syndrome (Sido B et al 1998).

As a result of glutathione deficiency, patients with HIV/AIDS have a buildup of free radicals. Numerous studies have shown that antioxidants can counter this buildup of dangerous free radicals (Foster HD 2004; McDermid JM et al 2002; Mollace V et al 2001; Patrick L 2000 Aug; Townsend DM et al 2003; Wu G et al 2004).

http://www.lef.org/protocols/infections/hiv_aids_01.htm

Featured Products

Life Extension Mix™ Tablets

Life Extension Mix is the cornerstone of a comprehensive supplement program because it provides so many well-studied nutrients. If you are on a budget, Life Extension Mix provides the best cost per milligram value. With the addition of the newest ingredients, Life Extension Mix has become an even greater value.

<http://www.lef.org/newshop/items/item00935.html>

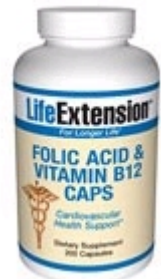


Folic Acid & Vitamin B12 Capsules

Folic acid provides the following health benefits:

- Helps protect the chromosomes against genetic damage.
- Lowers damaging homocysteine levels.
- Participates in the utilization of sugar and amino acids.
- Promotes healthier skin.
- Helps maintain a healthy GI tract.

<http://www.lef.org/newshop/items/item00347.html>



Life Extension

Annual Blood Test Super Sale on now!

Life Extension Foundation members are able to take the steps to help prevent future diseases, achieve ultimate health and save money too. Members are able to request their own blood tests and pay only a fraction of the price charged by commercial laboratories. In addition to saving money, this arrangement makes it convenient for members to have their blood drawn almost anywhere in the United States.

During our annual Blood Test Super Sale, members save 80% compared to the retail prices charged by commercial blood testing labs. Our Blood Testing service is designed for your maximum convenience, and you'll experience significant savings in the process.

<http://www.lef.org/bloodtest/index.html>

If you have questions or comments concerning this issue or past issues of *Life Extension Update*, send them to ddye@lifeextension.com or call 954 202 7716.

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