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Supplement use could save U.S. \$24 billion

A report released this month by the Dietary Supplement Education Alliance (DSEA) concluded that the use of dietary supplements by specific American populations could result in a savings of at least 24 billion in health care costs over a five year period. The current report updates a similar report commissioned by DSEA in 2005 which estimated 5.6 billion dollars in savings over five years.

The report re-emphasizes that supplementing select groups with calcium and vitamin D, folic acid, omega-3 essential fatty acids (EFAs), and lutein with zeaxanthin could have a tremendous impact on health care expenditure. In the summary of the findings, the report states that the use of calcium and vitamin D by postmenopausal women could potentially avoid approximately 776,00 hospitalizations for hip fractures and a significant number of extended nursing facility stays for this group, resulting in a savings of 16.1 billion dollars.

If folic acid were used by the 44 million American women of childbearing age, 600 fewer infants would be born with neural tube defects, resulting in a savings of 1.4 billion dollars over five years. Omega-3 fatty acid supplementation in the amount of 1800 milligrams per day among those over the age of 65 would result in a 3.2 billion dollar savings, and avoidance of 374,301 hospitalizations over the next five years. And just 6 to 10 milligrams lutein with zeaxanthin per day is estimated to save \$3.6 billion by preventing 190,927 individuals from losing their independence due to loss of central vision resulting from macular degeneration.

“Rapidly escalating health care costs in the U.S. have severe implications for our society as a whole,” DSEA president Jon Benninger stated. “This study provides valuable data that may lead to preventative health care solutions and address the budgetary problems facing federal and state health insurance programs, corporate health cost managers and individual families.”

According to the US Department of Health and Human Services and Department of Agriculture, “The Nutrition and Your Health: Dietary Guidelines for Americans acknowledges that some Americans may need a vitamin and/or mineral supplement to meet specific nutrient needs.” In view of the potential savings for an overburdened health care system alone, not to mention the prevention of a significant amount of suffering and disability, the consistent use of nutritional supplements by at-risk groups could greatly benefit these populations, as well as our society as a whole.

Health Concern

Age related macular degeneration

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is a condition characterized by the deterioration of the macula. Macular is derived from

the Latin word, macula, meaning spot. The macula is the central and most vital area of the retina, providing the clearest, most distinct vision needed, for example, in seeing fine detail, reading, driving, and recognizing facial features. There are two forms of macular degeneration: atrophic (dry) and neovascular (wet). Both forms of the disease may affect both eyes simultaneously. Vision can become severely impaired, with central vision rather than peripheral vision affected. The ability to see color is generally not affected, and total blindness from the condition is rare.

As lutein and zeaxanthin are the essential pigments within the macula, it is critical to replenish them as they become depleted through the aging process. Consumption of foods rich in these substances is especially important since they have a direct effect on macular pigment density. When the pigment in the macula is denser, retinal tearing or degeneration is less likely. Lutein and zeaxanthin are found in yellow or orange vegetables, in dark leafy greens, and in fruits with yellow or orange hues. Egg yolk is a good source of lutein. Dietary supplements of lutein and zeaxanthin are recommended.

<http://www.lef.org/protocols/prtcl-071.shtml>

Featured Products

Super Zeaxanthin with Lutein & Meso-zeaxanthin

Scientists long ago discovered that the carotenoids lutein and zeaxanthin help protect the macular region of the eye from harmful forms of light that can cause photooxidative damage to the eyes. New research has uncovered a third carotenoid, meso-zeaxanthin that the aging macula requires to maintain its structural density.

Up until recently there has not been a good dietary source of meso-zeaxanthin or availability as a dietary ingredient. New extraction processes can now extract meso-zeaxanthin from similar sources of lutein and zeaxanthin.

<http://www.lef.org/newshop/items/item00976.html>



Lutein Plus Powder

Lutein Plus Powder provides maximum strength lutein and zeaxanthin as well as other xanthophyll carotenoids.

<http://www.lef.org/newshop/items/item00260.html>



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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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