

Dr Neal's House Call
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We will be keeping the current week and the past week online so make sure that if you need to download it that you do so that week so you don't miss a single issue.

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Know that we are always here to help you achieve a healthier you!

Dr. Neal Speight and staff

Nutrient of the Month – Vitamin C Continued

Last month we went into some detail on Vitamin C, but I wanted to give you more this month especially because of the potential risk of more severe influenza this year or next and the potential of Vitamin C to be of benefit.

As I mentioned last month, a number of studies have suggested low to moderate dose Vitamin C does not cure the common cold, but can shorten its duration. The evidence for this stretches clear back to the 1940s.

Dr. Robert Klenner a graduate of Duke Medical School was a practicing physician in North Carolina in the middle and later years of the last century and published 28 papers on the use of Vitamin C in viral diseases between 1948 and the mid 1970s. He noted that in many cases where a viral infection is allowed to progress it could become the source for brain problems that could be prevented if proper amounts of Vitamin C were used prior to and during illness. In an article entitled "Significance of High Daily Intake of Ascorbic Acid" published in the Spring 1974 Journal of Preventive Medicine, Dr. Klenner states, "I reasoned it should be a maxim of medicine for large doses of Vitamin C be given in all pathological conditions while the physician ponders the diagnosis. The wisdom of this dictum is backed by many hundred cases under our supervision. I have seen critically ill chest patients well enough to go home after intravenous injection of 1 or 2 liters of 5% dextrose in water, each carrying 50 gm ascorbic acid. This procedure resulted in dramatic transition from sickness to health." Unfortunately, one would be hard pressed to find a Duke physician today embracing the concept of high dose Vitamin C. Is it because it is dangerous or just not complex enough for today's doctor? Let's take another look at Dr. Klenner's article.

"White cells ingest bacteria and in the process produce hydrogen peroxide. Hydrogen peroxide will combine with ascorbic acid to produce a substance which is lethal to bacteria. I have seen diphtheria, hemolytic streptococcus and staphylococcus infections clear within hours following injections of ascorbic acid..."

"The killing power of ascorbic acid is not limited to just herpes simplex and adenovirus. When proper amounts are used it will destroy all virus organisms. We found measles to be a medical curiosity. Specifically we observe that Vitamin C given prophylactically (before infection), by mouth, was not protective unless 1 gram was given every two hours around the clock. One gram every four hours would modify the attack. One gram given every four hours intramuscularly was also protective. With our own children we kept the measles syndrome going off and on for 30 days by giving 1 gram every two hours for two days, then off for two days. The disease was then

stopped by continuing 1 gram every two hours, by mouth for four days. By 1950 we learned that we could kill the measles virus in 24 hours by giving intramuscular injections in a dose range of 250mg/kg of body weight every 2 hours. We also found that we could dry up chicken pox in the same time, but more dramatic results were obtained by giving 400mg/kg body weight intravenously. Two to three injections in 24 hours were all that was required. We published these results in 1951. Recently, we cured a man weighing 85kg (approximately 170lbs) in four days taking 30 grams each day by mouth. In conclusion, the killing power of ascorbic acid on virus bodies has been demonstrated by me in hundreds of cases, many of which were treated in our hospital with nothing but vitamin C. We have published some 28 papers on this matter..." (1)

This paper is over 25 years old and yet Vitamin C has been marginalized in favor of more expensive medications in most recent years. While I am not against medications and their potential benefit to help, it seems a shame to me that we cannot embrace Vitamin C more fully in medicine as a means of helping with flu and other viral infections, especially in its IV form.

Mercury Poisoning

Vitamin C in high doses may serve as a chelator of heavy metals. In one study, rats given 200 mg of vitamin C a day for a week (the equivalent of about 14 grams/day in most humans), followed by a dose of mercury chloride that was known to be fatal 100% of the time, followed by daily vitamin C afterward were all found to be still alive 20 days after the mercury exposure.

Other observers have noted that doses of vitamin C between 10 and 20 grams daily seemed to "thin the fluid of the joints", lessening the tendency toward arthritis. While I doubt Vitamin C will ever be shown to reverse Rheumatoid Arthritis, it may be seen as a useful adjunct in the treatment of arthritis.

According to Dr. Klenner, 50 grams intravenously will also cure pancreatitis in less than 30 hours and ten grams daily will keep it away. Viral pericarditis (a viral infection around the heart) will respond to 400mg/kg of body weight of Vitamin C IV within 36 hours.

And what about the more recent literature?

In a study published in *The Journal Manipulative Physiologic Therapy* when patients took 1000mg hourly for six hours followed by 1000mg three times daily, the incidence of cold and flu decreased by 85% compared to a control group of patients who got no extra vitamin C. (2)

According to the Cochrane Reviews which review individual studies on vitamin C and try to put them all together and draw conclusions that have significance, Vitamin C had no real significance on the progress of flu or cold in doses up to 4 grams daily. In people using 8 grams daily, there was some marginal benefit. Any thing less than 8 grams daily was felt to have no real benefit on preventing the common cold. (3)

However, the problem is that you need to give at least eight if not 10 to 24 grams daily to achieve levels that really help kill infections. And according to the older literature you need 50 grams daily in some cases. When used though, it was apparently very powerful, especially in IV form. Interestingly while these high doses may cause diarrhea when you are well they often do not when you are ill because your tissues need more Vitamin C. Additionally, when given IV, the intestinal tract is not involved and diarrhea as a result of Vitamin C is even more of a rarity.

Overall, Vitamin C holds promise for many infections. I would suggest that more clinical trials be done using much higher dosages to see who benefits. In the mean time, I'd encourage you to take 2 grams at least four times daily when you're sick with a cold or flu. I guess that's it for this week. I hope you all do well and we'll

see you next month! Don't forget to send in your questions for next week to AskDrNeal@aol.com

To Your Health!!

Dr. Neal

References:

1) Klenner, FR, MD. Significance of High Daily Intake of Ascorbic Acid in Preventive Medicine. International Academy of Preventive Medicine 1974. 1(1)45ISBN 0094-321K.

2) J Manipulative Physiol Ther. 1999 Oct;22(8):530-3.

3) (Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2004 Oct 18;(4):CD000980).