



Dear Doctors,

My doctor recently told me to stop taking Vitamin E because it may actually increase my risk of heart attack or stroke. Is this true?

A.W. Stuart, Fl

Dear AW,

Nothing could be farther from the truth. Your doctor was probably referring to a poorly done review of existing literature paper published in Lancet in 2003. In that paper the authors said the findings of their review of other papers may suggest that beta-carotene may increase the risk of heart attack not vitamin E! The review was poorly done with dosage ranges of vitamin E that varied from 50-800 IU's. Since then over 200 studies have been done concerning Vitamin E and heart disease with all but one having positive findings for vitamin E improving some aspect of cardiovascular health that contributes to improved cardiac function. This brings out the main complaint of the research review, that the researchers were looking for vitamin E to act alone in preventing heart disease instead of looking at it as a part of a comprehensive program of supplemental nutrition and diet that when done as a whole reduces heart attacks and disease. A recent study called "The Pittsburgh Epidemiology of Diabetes Complications Study" showed that High alpha-tocopherol (vitamin E) levels among patients with renal disease and in those using vitamin supplements were associated with lower CAD risk in type 1 diabetes so the bulk of the evidence shows that you should continue to take vitamin E as part of a comprehensive heart health program that includes a healthy diet and exercise.

Yours in Health,
Dr. Ervolino

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