

Clinical Update

Vitamin E may slash lung cancer risk

Increasing intakes of vitamin E may decrease the risk of lung cancer by over 50%, according to a new study from the US.

(International Journal of Cancer, September 2008)

Researchers from the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center report that intakes of vitamin E in the alpha-tocopherol form were associated with consistent and independent reductions in lung cancer risk. Other forms of the vitamin did not have any effects on their own, they added.

There are eight forms of vitamin E: four tocopherols (alpha, beta, gamma, delta) and four tocotrienols (alpha, beta, gamma, delta). Alpha-tocopherol is the main source found in supplements and in the European diet, while gamma-tocopherol is the most common form in the American diet.

Mahabir and co-workers report results from an ongoing study involving 1,088 patients with lung cancer (average age 61.7) and 1,414 healthy controls (average age 60.8). Dietary intakes were assessed using a modified version of the 135-item National Cancer Institute's Health Habits and History Questionnaire Food Frequency Questionnaire. Demographic and lifestyle data were also collected, including smoking habits.

The researchers calculated that the highest average intakes of alpha-tocopherol (more than 7.73 mg per day) were associated with a 53 per cent reduction in lung cancer risk, compared to the lowest average intakes (less than 4.13 mg per day). This result took into account the other forms of tocopherols.

When the researchers accounted for the other tocopherols they observed no significant associations on lung cancer risk for beta-, gamma, and delta-tocopherol.

Considering all the tocopherols together, the highest average intake (more than 12.95 mg per day) was associated with a 55 per cent reduction in the risk of lung cancer, compared to the lowest average intakes (less than 6.68 mg per day), said the researchers.

Lung cancer is the most common form of cancer worldwide with over 1.2m new cases diagnosed annually, according to the European School of Oncology. It has one of the lowest survival rates with only 25 per cent of patients surviving more than one year after diagnosis (England and Wales).

Source: www.nutraingredients.com