



VITAMIN C

Vitamin C (ascorbic acid) is a water-soluble vitamin required for blood vessels health, bone and tooth health, and wound healing. The body cannot make vitamin C and so we rely on dietary sources to obtain it. The recommended amount of vitamin C in pregnancy is 85 mg per day and can be obtained from a reasonable diet without supplements.



VITAMIN C TO TREAT PREECLAMPSIA?



Vitamin C has been explored as a potential treatment option for preeclampsia due to its ability to reduce oxidative stress and vascular endothelial damage, both of which are linked to the pathophysiology of preeclampsia. Some studies have found lower blood levels of vitamin C in women with preeclampsia.

KEY FINDINGS

- Studies looking at the ability of vitamin C to prevent or treat preeclampsia are inconclusive.
- Small early studies suggested a reduced risk of developing preeclampsia with vitamin C, however, these studies had small sample sizes and poorly defined endpoints for treatment, which undermines their validity.
- A large clinical study published in the Lancet in 2006 testing vitamin C versus placebo found it was not protective against preeclampsia. The researchers even observed some detrimental effects of high dosage vitamin C such as higher rates of gestational hypertension and greater rates of stillbirth.



- In 2010, a trial with over 10,000 participants investigated the use of vitamins C and E in the prevention of pregnancy-associated hypertension including preeclampsia. Neither vitamin was found to reduce rates of preeclampsia or the adverse maternal or fetal outcomes caused by pregnancy-associated hypertension.
- A 2015 Cochrane Library review of 29 trials investigating the effects of vitamin C concluded that taking vitamin C during pregnancy does not help prevent pregnancy complications such as preeclampsia and stillbirth.

CONCLUSION

Despite promising effects on vascular health and reduction of oxidative stress, vitamin C does not prevent or treat preeclampsia.

