Debunking Medical Myths: We Can (Vitamin) C The Truth: Now You Can Too

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Myth: Vitamin C prevents and treats the common cold

WE CAN (VITAMIN) C THE TRUTH: NOW YOU CAN TOO

Chauhan, R., Choi, E., Falkowski, E., Lal, A., Nucum Jr., D., O’Malley, S. Orange 32

MYTH: VITAMIN C PREVENTS AND TREATS THE COMMON COLD

HOW DID THIS MYTH GET STARTED?

After Vitamin C was isolated in the 1930s, it became a proposed treatment for respiratory infections. Then, in the 1970s, Nobel Laureate Linus Pauling used results from earlier placebo-controlled trials to spread the myth that taking Vitamin C will prevent and alleviate the common cold. Since then, Vitamin C has been widely sold and used as a preventative and therapeutic agent against the common cold.

VITAMIN C DOES NOT PREVENT THE COMMON COLD

Multiple studies across various countries have indicated that Vitamin C supplementation DOES NOT prevent the common cold. In a meta-analysis of the 6 largest and most recent vitamin C supplementation studies, researchers analyzed over 5000 cases. Researchers compared those who took > or = 1 g/d of Vitamin C against those who hadn’t. Their analysis concluded that common cold incidence was not reduced for individuals taking Vitamin C supplementation versus those in placebo groups. 1,2

VITAMIN C DOES NOT TREAT THE COMMON COLD

A double-blind randomized clinical trial of 400 healthy volunteers assessed the effect of large Vitamin C doses on cold severity and duration after initial onset of common cold symptoms. There was no significant difference between the placebo group (0.03 g Vitamin C) and Vitamin C groups (1g, 3g, or 3g with additives) in cold severity and duration.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM THE COMMON COLD


1, 2, 3, 4