

## **Doctors Say, Reader's Digest is Wrong - Physicians and Researchers Set the Record Straight about Vitamins**

(OMNS, Apr 3, 2010) Yes, Reader's Digest actually said:

**"Once upon a time, you believed in the tooth fairy. . . And you figured that taking vitamins was good for you. Oh, it's painful when another myth gets shattered."** ( <http://www.rd.com/living-healthy/5-vitamin-truths-and-lies/article175625.html> )

But these doctors disagree:

"From start to finish, the Reader's Digest article, '5 Vitamin Truths and Lies' was one of the worst bits of propaganda I ever saw. There was not one word in it discussing the benefits of multivitamins, vitamin C, and studies supporting the use of vitamins for preventing cancer and heart disease. Not once was a single dose mentioned. This alone makes the entire effort a farce aimed at a readership that is relying on the publication for accurate information."

**Allan N. Spreen, M.D.** (Mesa, AZ)

"Vitamins are among the safest substances known. They have the most minimal side effects, even in large doses, compared with the death rate due to conventional drugs taken according to the manufacturers' advice. Vitamin C is among the most powerful immune modulators if given in large doses. Scare stories against the use of vitamins do the public no good."

**Erik Paterson, M.D.** (Vancouver, BC)

"This is not the first time Reader's Digest has written about "bad" vitamins, and they always seem to manage to put it on the front page. But look at their advertising: so much of it is for pharmaceutical drugs. No wonder the article states virtually nothing of the thousands of positive results with vitamins."

**James A. Jackson, Ph.D.** (Wichita, KS)

"The author of the Reader's Digest article has not understood the articles used to support her arguments. For example, with vitamin C and the common cold, the article appears to refer to the 2007 Cochrane report. However, this report has been updated frequently since 2007. The last update was on February 2nd of this year. Either the reporter did not read the up-to-date review, or she was unable to understand its content. The review applies only to low intakes, and contains major objections that studies of large doses and orthomolecular intakes were not included. All the data were for intakes far below the levels actually claimed to be effective. The summary of the paper does indeed give a misleading impression, but people might expect an intelligent reporter to check the rest of the report before giving advice."

**Steve Hickey, Ph.D.** (Manchester, UK)

"The material was not well-researched, and a bias was clearly in play. 15 pages of drug advertisements in that issue of Reader's Digest is very telling, indeed."

**Thomas E. Levy, M.D.** (Colorado Springs, CO)

"What a poor job! Reader's Digest needs to review the literature. Haven't they read any articles by Dr. Bruce Ames? Do they know what quantities of vitamin C ascorbic were used in the cold studies mentioned in their one-sided report? Do they know of the high doses that showed benefit? Do they know of the many studies that have reported benefit from vitamin E and carotenes? It's easy to be ignorant but biased. Before a magazine does such a public health disservice, first get the all the facts."

**Michael J. Gonzalez, Ph.D.** (San Juan, PR)

"As a family practitioner who has prescribed vitamins for many reasons, with beneficial results over the past 25 years, I have removed Reader's Digest from my waiting room. Unless there is a follow-up article disclaiming most of what was written, I will discourage my patients from reading Reader's Digest because of their biased and misleading information."

**Stephen Faulkner, M.D.** (Duncan, BC)

Owen Fonorow of The Vitamin C Foundation adds:

"Why did Reader's Digest deem it appropriate to publish unbalanced opinions about the value of vitamins in the April 2010 issue? A balanced report would have quoted experts from both sides of the argument. The negative studies of vitamins are biased, utilizing too small amounts, especially of vitamin C, to fairly evaluate the

therapeutic use of the vitamins. There is a 70-year-long history of vitamin C research (now more than 80,000 papers) that consistently shows therapeutic results at higher dosages of many thousands of milligrams. Linus Pauling recommended at least 5,000 mg of vitamin C daily for reversing heart disease. It is a serious public health mistake for Reader's Digest to recommend against a multivitamin."

To give Reader's Digest one more chance at the truth, send your thoughts directly to the people responsible:  
[RDEditorial\\_RDW@ReadersDigest.com](mailto:RDEditorial_RDW@ReadersDigest.com)

To learn more about how high doses of vitamins safely and effectively fight disease:  
<http://orthomolecular.org/resources/omns/index.shtml>

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