

**Orthomolecular Medicine News Service, February 04, 2010**  
**RDA for Vitamin C is 10% of USDA Standard for Guinea Pigs - Are You Healthier than a Lab Animal?**

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**The US RDA for vitamin C for humans is only 10% of the government's vitamin C standards for Guinea pigs.**

Wait a minute; that cannot possibly be true.

Can it?

The US Department of Agriculture states that "the Guinea pig's vitamin C requirement is 10-15 mg per day under normal conditions and 15-25 mg per day if pregnant, lactating, or growing." (1)

Well, that sounds reasonable. But how much is that compared to humans?

An adult guinea pig weighs about one kilogram (2.2 pounds). Guinea pigs therefore need between 10 and 25 milligrams of C per kilogram.

In the US, an average human weighs (at least) 82 kg (180 lbs). (2)

That means the USDA's standards, if fairly applied to us, would set our vitamin C requirement somewhere between 820 mg and 2,000 mg vitamin C per day.

The US RDA for vitamin C is different than that. Quite different.

It is lower. Much lower.

The US RDA for vitamin C for humans is 90 mg for men; 75 mg for women. (If you smoke, they allow an additional 35 mg/day extra. Wow.)

Why are we humans repeatedly urged to consume only the RDA when the RDA is one-tenth or less of that same government's official nutrient requirement for an animal?

No wonder so many people are sick and no wonder their medical bills are so high.

If we are going to have health insurance coverage for everyone, wouldn't it be nice for the government to first offer us the same deal it gives to Guinea pigs?

(Andrew W. Saul taught nutrition, health science and cell biology at the college level. He is the author of *Doctor Yourself* and *Fire Your Doctor!* and, with Dr. Abram Hoffer, co-author of *Orthomolecular Medicine for Everyone* and *The Vitamin Cure for Alcoholism*. Saul is featured in the documentary film *Food Matters*. He is on the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Orthomolecular Medicine*.)

References:

(1) US Department of Agriculture Animal Care Resource Guide, Animal Care, 12.4.2  
[http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_welfare/downloads/manuals/dealer/feeding.pdf](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/downloads/manuals/dealer/feeding.pdf)

(2) National Center for Health Statistics <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/04news/americans.htm> In 2002, the average weight for men in the United States was 191 pounds and for women was 164 pounds. Few would dispute that these weights have gone up significantly in the last eight years.

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