

Tamoxifen May Positively Interact With Vitamins E and C

A team of researchers in India found early preliminary evidence that vitamins C and E may be helpful for women who are taking the drug tamoxifen for breast cancer. Tamoxifen is an "anti-estrogen" used in women with breast cancer. Although this drug can be quite effective, it also has the effect of raising levels of triglycerides (fat) in the blood. This, in turn, would be expected to lead to an increased risk of heart disease and strokes.

Researchers found that adding vitamin C (500mg/day) and vitamin E (400mg/day) substantially reduced triglyceride levels. In addition, the vitamins improved levels of total cholesterol, LDL ("bad") cholesterol, and HDL ("good") cholesterol. However, these results are preliminary and the study was not a double blind, placebo-controlled trial.

More rigorous clinical trials are needed to determine whether tamoxifen users really should add vitamins E and C to their diets. (See Babu JR, Sundravel S, Arumugam G, et al. Salubrious effect of vitamin C and vitamin E on tamoxifen-treated women in breast cancer with reference to plasma lipid and lipoprotein levels.

Cancer Letter 2000;151:1-5.)

Ann's NOTE: This is a study that is unlikely to ever be duplicated in the US. Big Pharma controls what is studied by way of funding. No entity is likely to fund this, although clearly it could be beneficial for all of us who are asked/told to take it.