

Vitamin C—Essential Nutrient or Wonder Drug?

Vitamin C has been considered a wonder drug by many people, including a two-time Nobel Prize winner. Unfortunately, although it is **1** so very essential for many growth and repair activities in the body, vitamin C does not live up to most other claims.

Linus Pauling was one of the earliest, and most famous, of the vitamin C supporters. He was a brilliant chemist and **2** deferential humanitarian who won both the Nobel Prize in Chemistry and the Nobel Peace Prize for his work. His later work on vitamin C still serves for many as proof that vitamin C is a wonder drug; **3** as a result, his work never supported his theories.

4 [1] In 1932, vitamin C was identified as the nutrient that prevents scurvy. [2] The symptoms of scurvy are caused mainly by the body's inability to repair and replace damaged cells. [3] The word "scurvy" has been in use since the 1500s and is believed to have Dutch and French origins. [4] These symptoms appear after months without sufficient vitamin C, usually because of a poor diet. [5] Getting enough vitamin C is therefore essential to good health. [6] Pauling and others **5** implied that increasing vitamin C intake beyond the amount found in a balanced diet could do more than just maintain good health.

For example, Pauling was certain that high doses of vitamin C could cure cancer. His research with cancer patients did not reveal any conclusive support **6** for his theory, very high doses of vitamin C slowed the growth of certain tumors but did not shrink them. The high levels of vitamin C were also dangerous and actually interfered with other cancer treatments.

Pauling and others were also convinced that high doses of vitamin C could prevent and cure colds. Research has shown that people with a high vitamin C intake recover from colds slightly faster than people with a normal intake. **7** However, for the average person, who gets a few a year, this means reducing sick days a little bit. Unfortunately, increasing levels of vitamin C in the body once a person has come down with a cold makes no difference.

The recommended daily intake of vitamin C for adult males is 90 mg, and for women it is 75 mg. Amounts up to twice that much can be absorbed well by the digestive system, but excessive amounts cannot. People who take high doses only absorb about 50 percent of the vitamin. **8** The unabsorbed vitamin will have caused digestive problems, such as **9** nausea, diarrhea and abdominal cramps. The slightly shorter cold duration obtained at high doses is not worth the possible side effects.

Vitamin C is important for **10** good health. People should make sure they get the recommended amount by eating a balanced diet. However, a person who takes higher doses through supplements will see almost no additional benefit and in fact may feel worse from the side effects.**11**

1.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. very essential
- C. important and essential
- D. essential

2.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. dedicated
- C. good
- D. loyal

3.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. because
- C. however
- D. so

4. Which sentence in paragraph 3 is least relevant to the main idea of the paragraph?

- A. Sentence 1
- B. Sentence 2
- C. Sentence 3
- D. Sentence 5

5.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. reasoned
- C. judged
- D. philosophized

6.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. for this theory, so very high doses
- C. for his theory very high doses
- D. for his theory; very high doses

7. Which choice most effectively supports the claim that vitamin C has only a slight effect on people's ability to recover from colds?

- A. However, for most people, who get colds around 3 times a year, it is not much time.
- B. However, for an average person, who gets colds every year, this amounts to only about two or three days a year.
- C. However, for most people, who get a lot of colds each year, this doesn't add up to be much time.

- D. However, for the average person, who gets about 3 colds a year, this means reducing sick days from about 24 to about 22.

8.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. The unabsorbed vitamin can cause digestive problems,
- C. The unabsorbed vitamin has caused digestive problems,
- D. The unabsorbed vitamin could have caused digestive problems,

9.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. nausea diarrhea, and abdominal
- C. nausea, diarrhea, and abdominal
- D. nausea, diarrhea, and abdominal,

10. Which choice most effectively combines the sentences at the underlined portion?

- A. good health, making sure
- B. good health, but people should make sure
- C. good health, and people should make sure
- D. good health; however making sure

11. Which choice most effectively establishes a summative concluding sentence for the paragraph?

- A. Vitamin C may not be a "wonder" drug, but it is an essential nutrient for all of us.
- B. Vitamin C is found in fruits and vegetables, such as oranges, peppers, tomatoes, and broccoli.
- C. Vitamin C supplements have always been accompanied by false claims, so choose one carefully.
- D. Vitamin C supplements are sold in a pharmacy or health food store near you.