

THE Wellness Minute

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Chiropractic & Antioxidants

What Is An Antioxidant?

Anti-oxidants are naturally occurring chemicals that protect the body from free radicals. Fresh fruits and vegetables are good sources of anti-oxidants, but your body also produces anti-oxidants to ward off damage. The difference is that those antioxidants we get from our food are used only one time in defense of oxidative stress to a free radical, whereas, those made by our body are used over and over again for our defenses.

What About Taking Antioxidant Supplements ... Can They Help?

We've learned to accept the idea that if antioxidants found in fruits and vegetables have a positive effect on the body, that taking high doses of antioxidants in the form of supplements may even be better. The research doesn't support that paradigm. In fact, high doses of antioxidants in controlled studies have shown them to be ineffective and potentially damaging to the body. The 2007 Women's Antioxidant Cardiovascular Study failed to show any heart risk protection from taking ascorbic acid (a Vitamin C synthetic fraction), alpha tocopheral (a Vitamin E synthetic fraction), or beta carotene (a Vitamin A synthetic fraction). In fact, high doses of the Vitamin C synthetic fraction (ascorbic acid) are now used to destroy cancer cells due to ascorbic acid's ability to act as a free radical and destroy cancer cell

membranes. In other words, high doses of antioxidants can act as a pro-oxidant and destroy cells.

How Does Chiropractic Care Affect Your Natural (self-made) Antioxidants?

In a 2015 study, researchers looked at 23 people who were suffering from back or neck pain. Each patient received 10 chiropractic adjustments over a period of five weeks. Blood samples were taken from the test subjects before and after the study period, and the researchers noted levels of three specific antioxidants: superoxide dismutase (SOD), catalase, and glutathione peroxidase (GPx) that your body manufactures. At the end of the study, there was no difference in antioxidant catalase, however, **there was a significant increase in both SOD and GPx.**¹



It appears that chiropractic care upregulates your immune system and protective mechanisms. Later, we will look at other ways to improve your body's defenses.

1. Kolberg, Carolina et al., *Peripheral Oxidative Stress Blood Markers in Patients With Chronic Back or Neck Pain Treated With High-Velocity, Low-Amplitude Manipulation*, Journal of Manipulative & Physiological Therapeutics, Feb. 2015, Volume 38, Issue 2, 119 – 129.