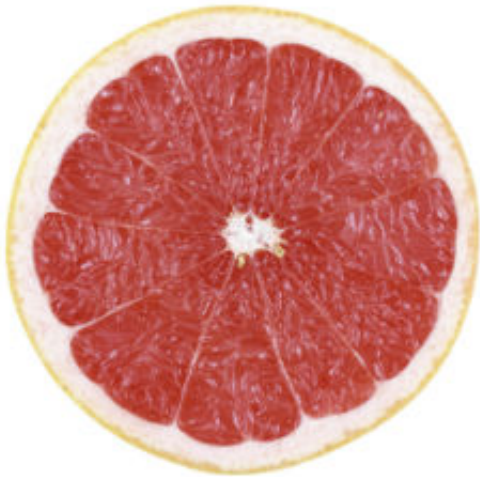


Vitamin C related to reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and early death

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New research from the University of Copenhagen and Herlev and Gentofte Hospital shows that high vitamin C concentrations in the blood from the intake of fruit and vegetables are associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and early death.

Fruit and vegetables are healthy. We all know that. And now there is yet another good reason for eating lots of it. New research from the University of Copenhagen shows that the risk of [cardiovascular disease](#) and [early death](#) falls with a high intake of [fruit](#) and vegetables, and that this may be due to vitamin C.

The study, which has just been published in the well known *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, is based on the Copenhagen General Population Study.

As part of the study, the researchers had access to data about 100,000 Danes and their intake of [fruit and vegetables](#) as well as their DNA. "We can see that those with the highest intake of fruit and

vegetables have a 15% lower risk of developing cardiovascular disease and a 20% lower risk of early death compared with those who very rarely eat fruit and vegetables. At the same time, we can see that the [reduced risk](#) is related to high vitamin C concentrations in the blood from the fruit and vegetables," says Camilla Kobylecki, a medical doctor and PhD student at the Department of Clinical Biochemistry, Herlev and Gentofte Hospital.

Vitamin C from food rather than supplements

Among other things, vitamin C helps build connective tissue which supports and connects different types of tissues and organs in the body. Vitamin C is also a potent antioxidant which protects cells and biological molecules from the damage which causes many diseases, including cardiovascular disease. The human body is not able to produce vitamin C, which means that we must get the vitamin from our diet.

"We know that fruit and vegetables are healthy, but now our research is pinpointing more precisely why this is so. Eating a lot of fruit and [vegetables](#) is a natural way of increasing vitamin C blood levels, which in the long term may contribute to reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease and early death. You can get vitamin C supplements, but it is a good idea to get your vitamin C by eating a healthy diet, which will at the same time help you to develop a healthier lifestyle in the long term, for the general benefit of your health," says Boerge Nordestgaard, a clinical professor at the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences, University of Copenhagen, and a consultant at Herlev and Gentofte Hospital.

The researchers are now continuing their work to determine which other factors, combined with vitamin C, have an impact on cardiovascular disease and death.

Provided by University of Copenhagen

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