



Angus McLeod <angus.p.mcleod@gmail.com>

Some thoughts on Atlantic article on Vitamin supplements. s

4 messages

Louise Quekett <louise@quekett.com>

Wed, Jul 31, 2013 at 2:34 AM

To: Rupert Quekett <rupert@quekett.com>, Joanne McLeod <joannemcleod@hotmail.com>, Angus McLeod <angus.p.mcleod@gmail.com>, Rory McLeod <rory.i.mcleod@gmail.com>

Cc: Graham Walne <graham2@iinet.net.au>, mitch hayhow <mitch@capediscoverywines.com>, Glen McLeod <glen@mcleodlawyer.com>, Allanah Lucas <Allanah.Lucas@eoc.wa.gov.au>, Rohan Hayhow <rohan_hayhow@westnet.com.au>

Here is an article from the Atlantic I found quite surprising:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2013/07/the-vitamin-myth-why-we-think-we-need-supplements/277947/>

First of all, we have to admit that there is some pretty heavy bias going on here. This article is quite clearly selective in favour of studies that show the inefficacy of vitamin supplements, never mentioning whether or not other modern medical meta-analysis exist which show any positive effects from any vitamin supplement, which makes me slightly suspicious. The polemicism is likewise unattractive: the fact that one misguided and possibly deranged scientist heavily promoted the efficacy of vitamins has nothing to do with whether or not they are actually effective when used IN MODERATION by ordinary people who do not expect them to cure cancer.

The blatancy of the final paragraph's *post hoc ergo propter hoc* is also just so distasteful:

"In May 1980, during an interview at Oregon State University, Linus Pauling was asked, "Does vitamin C have any side effects on long-term use of, let's say, gram quantities?" Pauling's answer was quick and decisive. "No," he replied.

Seven months later, his wife was dead of stomach cancer. In 1994, Linus Pauling died of prostate cancer."

This is jaw-dropping. Clearly a cases Vitamin C poisoning – why, he was only 94 years old!

Despite this writer's wince-inducing logical ineptitude, I was very surprised to discover that among the few reliable statements made therein, it is true that overwhelming scientific evidence including many replicated studies and meta-analyses show that vitamin C has no effect whatsoever on cold and flu. Furthermore, it also appears to be true that the vast

amounts of vitamins we consume are largely either ineffective, not readily bio-available or are even potentially harmful.

Why then do we all believe that vitamin C is what to take for colds? How can it be ethical for chemists sell it to us on this basis?

Now I don't know what to do about my routines of taking all the pills and potions I take regularly as health supplements. Does anyone know more, or about any studies not mentioned that do show beneficial effects of all the supplements we take? Or have the slippery wording of the manufacturers and their advertisers succeeded to the extent that their false claims are now regarded as folk wisdom or even common sense? Vitamin supplements are SO expensive!!!

Any thoughts? If you read the article and/or some study abstracts, will it change whether or not you take vitamin C when you have a cold?

Love,

Louise

Glen McLeod <glen@mcleodlawyer.com>

Wed, Jul 31, 2013 at 3:30 AM

To: Louise Quekett <louise@quekett.com>

Cc: Rupert Quekett <rupert@quekett.com>, Joanne McLeod <joannemcleod@hotmail.com>, Angus McLeod <angus.p.mcleod@gmail.com>, Rory McLeod <rory.i.mcleod@gmail.com>, Graham Walne <graham2@iinet.net.au>, mitch hayhow <mitch@capediscoverywines.com>, Allanah Lucas <Allanah.Lucas@eoc.wa.gov.au>, Rohan Hayhow <rohan_hayhow@westnet.com.au>

Lou

I first learnt of Linus Pauling in my 1971 Chemistry class at school and was aware of his advocacy of vc. He was always regarded with reverence, as far as I am aware. I have used vc over the years and believe it has been beneficial for me. I am in no position to critique the studies. However the debate has been raging for years and a number of clever doctors support its use. This doesn't mean that studies to the contrary are wrong. However balanced doctors like Robbie Simons and John Troy who appear to be among the best I have met support the use of vc. To understand there are studies to the contrary and to take a final view would require a lot more information about the who undertook the studies and their methodology. The Atlantic article is, as you say, polemical and I for one am unconvinced.

Thanks for sharing this with me.

Best wishes,

Dad

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Love,

Louise

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Allanah Lucas <Allanah.Lucas@eoc.wa.gov.au>

Wed, Jul 31, 2013 at 4:37 AM

To: Glen McLeod <glen@mcleodlawyer.com>, Louise Quekett <louise@quekett.com>

Cc: Rupert Quekett <rupert@quekett.com>, Joanne McLeod <joannemcleod@hotmail.com>, Angus McLeod <angus.p.mcleod@gmail.com>, Rory McLeod <rory.i.mcleod@gmail.com>, Graham Walne <graham2@iinet.net.au>, mitch hayhow <mitch@capediscoverywines.com>, Rohan Hayhow <rohan_hayhow@westnet.com.au>

I share Glen's viewpoint on this and will continue with my supplements.

Purchasing supplements in bulk is cheaper so talk to me about this Louise.

Thanks
Allanah

From: Glen McLeod [mailto:glen@mcleodlawyer.com]

Sent: Wed 31/07/2013 3:30 PM

To: Louise Quekett

Cc: Rupert Quekett; Joanne McLeod; Angus McLeod; Rory McLeod; Graham Walne; mitch hayhow; Allanah Lucas; Rohan Hayhow

Subject: Re: Some thoughts on Atlantic article on Vitamin supplements. s

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Angus McLeod <angus.p.mcleod@gmail.com>

Wed, Jul 31, 2013 at 5:34 AM

To: Allanah Lucas <Allanah.Lucas@eoc.wa.gov.au>

Cc: Glen McLeod <glen@mcleodlawyer.com>, Louise Quekett <louise@quekett.com>, Rupert Quekett <rupert@quekett.com>, Joanne McLeod <joannemcleod@hotmail.com>, Rory McLeod <rory.i.mcleod@gmail.com>, Graham Walne <graham2@iinet.net.au>, mitch hayhow <mitch@capediscoverywines.com>, Rohan Hayhow <rohan_hayhow@westnet.com.au>

Dear all,

With respect to the elder viewpoints just expressed, I heartily agree with the conclusion suggested by the article from the Atlantic. All the scientific analyses and meta-analyses I have come across also suggest the same conclusion. There is simply no evidence that vitamin supplements have any beneficial effect.

The fact that doctors suggest you take them is in my view quite unsatisfactory. They are working off of the same evidence. there aren't secret studies that they are privy to. If there are some reputable studies suggesting otherwise, I'd be happy to change my mind. In my view the medical profession should be science-based, not faddish. The supplement industry is in a similar league as homeopathy, but more mainstream.

What really raises my ire in that industry is the multivitamin. Even if there was any evidence that taking vitamin supplements was beneficial, taking a multivitamin would still be pointless because they contain only trace elements of each ingredient, literally making them on par with homeopathy. Multivitamins are also often the most expensive supplement, because they give the impression of covering many bases. The worst exemplar of this is the 'kids' multivitamin. Medically worthless, of dubious nutritional value (they're basically lollies) and marketed in such a way to play on a mother's fears.

My advice would be to not buy supplements.

Kind regards to all,

Angus

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