

By PW?L HP?QJMU ! - A@QLCUQ - December 16, 2013, 5: 04 PM

# Multivitamin researchers say "case is closed" after studies find no health benefits

848 Amik k clq!- 4.3K Qf\_jooq!- 1.2K Ru ocaq!- Qisk `j!- Ck\_g Kmp:0

"Enough" with the multivitamins already.

That's the message from doctors behind three new studies and an editorial that tackled an oft-debated question in medicine: Do daily multivitamins make you healthier?

After reviewing the available evidence and conducting new trials, the authors have come to a conclusion of "no."

"We believe that the case is closed -- supplementing the diet of well-nourished adults with (most) mineral or vitamin supplements has no clear benefit and might even be harmful," concluded the authors of the **editorial** summarizing the new research papers, published Dec. 16 in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*. "These vitamins should not be used for chronic disease prevention. Enough is enough."

They went on to urge consumers to not "waste" their money on multivitamins.

"The 'stop wasting your money' means that perhaps you're spending money on things that won't protect you long term," editorial co-author Dr. Edgar Miller, a professor of medicine and epidemiology at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore, told CBS News' chief medical correspondent Dr. Jon LaPook. "What will protect you is if you spend the money on fruits, vegetables, nuts, beans, low fat dairy, things like that ..exercising would probably be a better use of the money."

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The strong message was based on a review of the findings from three studies that tracked multivitamins link to cancer protection, heart health, and brain and cognitive measures.

Vitamin and mineral supplements are taken by an estimated half of all Americans.



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The **first study**, which was released online Nov. 12 in *Annals*, was a review of 24 studies and two trials on more than 350,000 individuals that looked at vitamin supplementation's role in preventing chronic disease. The review was conducted to find evidence that can be used to update vitamin treatment guidelines from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, a panel of medical experts who recommend the government on treatments.

That review found no evidence that vitamin and mineral supplementation would **reduce heart disease** in pill takers. Two of the trials found a small, "borderline-significant benefit" in **cancer risk reduction, but only in men**. Overall, the panel concluded there was no solid evidence for or against taking vitamins and minerals alone, or that a multivitamin to prevent heart disease or cancer. More strikingly, it found enough evidence to recommend against taking beta-carotene or vitamin E for preventing both diseases, finding they not only didn't help but the former may raise risk for lung cancer for already at-risk individuals.



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"In the absence of clear evidence about the impact of most vitamins and multivitamins on cardiovascular disease and cancer, health care professionals should counsel their patients to eat a healthy, well-balanced diet that is rich in nutrients," the **Task Force concluded**.

The **next study**, published Dec. 16 in *Annals*, looked at cognitive health and whether long-term use of multivitamins would have any effect. Researchers assigned almost 5,950 male doctors aged 65 and older to take either a daily

multivitamin or placebo for 12 years in a randomized, placebo-controlled trial,

Based on the results of memory tests, the researchers found the multivitamin did nothing to slow cognitive decline among men 65 and older compared to placebo takers.

"These data do not provide support for use of multivitamin supplements in the prevention of cognitive decline," wrote the authors, led by Dr. Francine Grodstein, an epidemiologist who studies aging at Harvard School of Public Health in Boston.

It's worth noting this study only looked at cognitive test results, not actual development of dementia.

The **third study** looked specifically at multivitamins and minerals role in preventing another heart attack, or myocardial infarction. They looked at more than 1,700 people who had a heart attack at least six weeks earlier, and randomized them to receive daily high-dose multivitamins and minerals or



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28 NFMRMQ

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6./ Multivitamin no help against cancer, heart, memory woes

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122 "Wastebook" report singles out \$30B in federal spending

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/.0 Ga. student suspended for year after hugging teacher



AmLqsk cpPcnmpq8/  
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placebos for five years.

Having a heart attack raises risk for another attack, or cardiovascular event like stroke or premature death, so if multivitamins could reduce risk, they could be a boon to public health.

The researchers found no difference in rates of another heart attack, chest pain, the need for hospitalization, cardiac catheterization, or rates of stroke and early death between vitamin-takers and placebo-takers. But, they said the conclusions should be taken with caution,

because several participants stopped taking vitamins early.

The authors of the editorial say the evidence is clear about supplements, except for **vitamin D**, which has been shown to be both effective and **ineffective** for preventing falls and fractures in elderly.

"Sales of multivitamins and other supplements have not been affected by major studies with null results, and the U.S. supplement industry continues to grow, reaching \$28 billion in annual sales in 2010," wrote the authors of the editorial summary, led by Dr. Eliseo Guallar, a professor of epidemiology who specializes in heart disease prevention at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore. "We should translate null and negative findings into action. The message is simple: Most supplements do not prevent chronic disease or death, their use is not justified, and they should be avoided."

Last year, Pfizer agreed to remove "breast health" and "colon health" claims from some of its Centrum multivitamins **following pressure from the Center for Science in the Public Interest**, which said their claims of cancer prevention were misleading.

A dietary supplement industry group slammed the editorial and studies.

"The editorial demonstrates a close-minded, one-sided approach that attempts to dismiss even the proven benefits of vitamins and minerals," Steve Mister, president and CEO of the Council for Responsible Nutrition, said in a statement. "It's a shame for consumers that the authors refuse to recognize the real-life need for vitamin and mineral supplementation, living in a fairy-tale world that makes the inaccurate assumption that we're all eating healthy diets and getting everything we need from food alone."

One expert agreed some nutrient-deficient people may still benefit from multivitamins.

"There might be an argument to continue taking a multi(vitamin) to replace or supplement your not healthy diet," Dr. Robert Graham, an internal medicine physician at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City, added to CBS News.

LaPook also notes that vitamins can benefit people with certain conditions, like celiac disease -- where the body cannot properly absorb nutrients -- and pregnancy, where folic acid helps prevent birth defects

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**Ryan Jaslow**

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Ryan Jaslow is CBSNews.com's health editor.

?pmslb hfcU c`

What's this?



This Body... By Eating This...

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Multivitamin no help against cancer, heart, memory woes

848 AMK K CLRQ



13-year-old brain dead after tonsil surgery

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What your multivitamin can and can't do for you

12 AMK K CLRQ



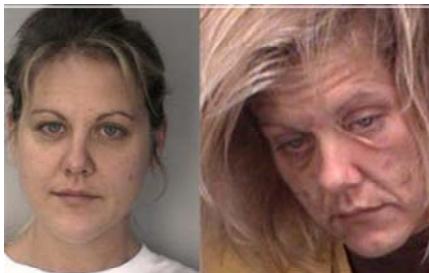
Marijuana use linked to concerning brain changes in teens

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FDA to require proof antibacterial soaps actually work, are safe

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Side effects of using meth include paranoia, hallucinations, psychosis, stroke and death



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ALEX1939 6 minutes ago

What a CROCK! This is horrifying! Ryan Jaslow should write an apology and retraction

of the first three paragraphs of this article. I am shocked and dismayed that CBS News allowed such a "headline" and article which blatantly mischaracterize the point of the studies. All three were VERY specific about certain diseases only, were aimed at small groups, and one of them appears to be potentially relevant only to men over age 65. This is HIGHLY irresponsible and CBS should do a follow-up report with a different headline immediately! Unfortunately, the Internet has created millions of "speed readers" and some don't even read the entire articles. CBS should take greater responsibility for this sad fact and scrutinize its headlines. This one should have read, "Once Again, Studies Conclude that Fruits and Vegetables May Provide Better Nutrition and Disease Prevention than Pills." Really...? The fact that wholesome food is better is now considered "news?" These so-called "medical studies" shouldn't be churned-out so quickly as it they have reached astounding "discoveries" and conclusions which benefit us "all." Shame, shame, shame on your Jaslow and CBS -- grow a backbone and do the right thing. (You can be guided along by the several hundred comments to this poor excuse for news journalism.)

LIKE / REPLY

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BRANDONSHW00 *2 hours ago*

No one is really claiming that multi-vitamins have this effect. Such claims are usually made for other nutritional supplements not found in multi-vitamins. You are aware that there are hundreds of other types of nutritional supplements, right?

LIKE / REPLY

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TBRAID *3 hours ago*

This is shameful journalism. Who paid for this?

LIKE / REPLY

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FULLSPINZOO *4 hours ago*

Was in the hospital for 2 days, 2 nights and \$29,000 later I was prescribed all kinds of "crap" for life. Took these pills for a month or two and then I decided to see a naturapathic doctor in Arizona. He had me take a multivitamin, a blood thinner, and vitamin D liquid drops. I feel great all the time when I take these. These doctors push the hell out of these pills because they are on a commission basis, and the general public doesn't know better. That's why hollistic doctors are frowned upon. They cut into this major scam produced by the big pharmaceutical companies. Have you ever watched a pill commercial? The disclaimer at the end is usually longer than the commercial itself.

LIKE / REPLY

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EROTEME2 *9 hours ago*

I don't take multi-vitamins. However, if were to 'waste' my money taking them, this would be my decision and I would resent anyone telling me I must not take them because they will (may?) not improve my health.

LIKE / REPLY

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LESS\_IS\_MORE *10 hours ago*

Hey doctors...no S Sherlock! You don't take a multi-vitamin to protect against any ONE disease or problem. A good multi-vitamin made by a good company (not you Centrum and other cheap drugstore brands) is like the foundation of the food pyramid in the supplement world. Jesus H and all that is holy! Get a better education and stop trying to block access to something that you have no knowledge of! When you know as much about supplements as I do, then perhaps I will take the results of some of your "studies" more seriously. And those of you who do not want to take supplements and herbs and who don't think they work...I am fine with that. But, you don't have the right to tell me whether I can take them. If I want to spend my money on them, then it shouldn't be any skin off your backs.

LIKE / REPLY

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12 hours ago

"agree that multivitamins don't do much, but they don't hurt either, and many people get inadequate vitamins and minerals from their diet. What they don't discuss, is that 'supplements' goes FAR beyond multivitamins, and there is little doubt that many supplements do a lot!...Dwight McKee MD,

Integrative Oncologist, Hematologist, Internist and clinical nutritionist

LIKE / REPLY

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12 hours ago

What a bogus study again, probably from Big Pharma! Merck was just creating a synthetic B3 Niacin and it had horrible consequences. Why not stay with the real thing. And Vitamins and Minerals work well. Husband had a low red blood cell count of 6 instead of 14 and it was eliminated by taking iron supplement. I have never had a cold or flu but I take Vitamin C and Zinc and a myriad of other vitamins and minerals. Who is behind this story, probably big pharma, always wanting to shut down the vitamin companies. And remember the scorbout sailors used to get on ships until they took Vitamin C and saved their teeth. Mothers who give birth to babies and have had no folic acid available in their diet always will have a child with a split mouth, cleft!

Do not sell us for stupid!

LIKE / REPLY

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USMCBRIT1 14 hours ago

I've been telling my wife this for years-but I think multi-vitamins made her hard of hearing!

LIKE / REPLY

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C. RED 16 hours ago

So basically this study also implies that all oral supplements don't work? Because last time I checked there's mountains of research supporting the efficacy and health benefits of such things as Vitamin C, Vitamin D3, Zinc, Iron, Magnesium etc... But if all of them are put together into a multivitamin they magically stop working right? Worst. Study. Ever.

That being said, the majority of common brand multivitamins you find in big box stores contain insignificant traces of what's on the label and are mostly filled with vitamin A and binding agents. Doesn't mean good multi's don't work. This article should not be published.

/LIKE / REPLY

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JONSEEN 18 hours ago

So... one group of researchers wants to have the FINAL word on this? I have a big problem with "CASE CLOSED." Seems rather overbearing to me.

And this article doesn't emphasize that they're talking about HEALTHY people who eat right. There are PLENTY of people who DO need vitamin supplements, for a whole long list of legitimate reasons. In fact, vitamin supplements can be life-saving at times.

So don't throw out the vitamins just yet, In My Opinion.

LIKE / REPLY

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ENLIGHTENU 18 hours ago

@Jonseen Even eating right does not help. Our soil is so worn that most foods do not contain the vitamins you would expect. And yes, "case closed" is not in the vocabulary of science.

LIKE / REPLY

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SUKECE 7 hours ago

@enlightenu @Jonseen

Absolutely correct!

LIKE / REPLY

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VMARSHMELLOW 18 hours ago

This article states that vitamin and mineral supplementation do not improve health. Does this include anemia? Because when i was anemic and started taking iron supplements it did a lot to improve my health. Hmmm. What about people who test low in vitamin D? or one of the B vitamins?

Maybe they should have said instead that people who don't need vitamin and mineral supplements don't need vitamin and mineral supplements. But some of us obviously do. And for those who aren't sure ... well some of us just like to err on the side of caution.

/LIKE / REPLY

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JONSEEN 18 hours ago

@vmarshmellow Excellent point!!!

LIKE / REPLY

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SUKECE 7 hours ago

@vmarshmellow

thank you!

Gotta have my D. I ran out and after a month I was rebuilding my levels all over again.

LIKE / REPLY

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MYTHBUSTER2014 18 hours ago

Yet another obvious attempt of Big Pharma's tacit influence on orthodox medicine and its ties to so-called researchers to destroy anything that threatens its drug sales. There is NO way one can get all the necessary micronutrients from even the best organic diet in today's world of depleted and polluted air, water, and soil. Couple that with the time it reaches the grocery shelves and you can knock off even more nutrition. Couple that with the individual and genetic needs some of us (like me) that are UNABLE to get all the nutrients from foods and in which supplements are absolutely essential for optimal wellness. Only an idiot who has no clue as to their unique biochemistry would take these corrupt fear-mongers who disseminate skewed results and research as in this article at their word.

1 LIKE / REPLY

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CERGEON21 19 hours ago

As a student pharmacist learning the involvement of vitamins in biochemical processes, this article is not full of bullish\*t, but its full of horsesh\*t!!

1 LIKE / REPLY

SID444 19 hours ago

@**cergeon21** Is there much difference?

LIKE / REPLY

ENLIGHTENU 18 hours ago

@**sid444**@**cergeon21** One contains more vitamins.

/LIKE / REPLY

PAREIDOLIA- 19 hours ago

Spend all that supplement money on a gym membership and a bag of fruit. Your body will thank you for it.

LIKE / REPLY

SID444 19 hours ago

The journal used in this editorial (including the 2/3 of the studies used in it), keeps showing up as "embargoed" in the search engine. Few details can be found about this, so far.

LIKE / REPLY

PAREIDOLIA- 19 hours ago

Do you live in China?

<http://annals.org>

LIKE / REPLY

SID444 19 hours ago

@**pareidolia**- No.

LIKE / REPLY

CAZBIT 19 hours ago

I beg to differ, the research of Dr. Joel Wallach, which in the Smithsonian institute as a national treasure, shows that animals and humans get sick and die from Vitamin and Nutrient deficiencies. If you follow farming, even if you do eat right, the food does not have everything you need in it. the food is grown with chemical fertilizers, much of it is GMO, and the livestock is pumped full of antibiotics.

Furthermore, Vitamins and Minerals do not need a disclaimer that takes up 75% of the commercial with "side effects" that include death. I don't trust ANYTHING that is backed by big pharma like this study. Those people don't care if you die, as long as their profits roll in. Nothing that comes from them is credible.

You know what? what works for you works for you. What works for me works for me, isn't that enough?

1 LIKE / REPLY

PAREIDOLIA- 19 hours ago

So how did humans survive before bottled vitamins were available?

LIKE / REPLY

ENLIGHTENU 18 hours ago

@**pareidolia**- It's called shifting baselines. Food grown today is not



as nutritious as food grown as recently as the 1930's.

LIKE / REPLY

12 hours ago

**@pareidolia**- We did not have a depleted earth then, no fertilizers of today, etc.

LIKE / REPLY

RUSH2014 19 hours ago

Bottom line - there is always a middle ground, always - one can eat well and take supplements too - its ok. Why is it one or the other with most folks? Folic Acid prevents birth defects, iodine was added to salt and it prolonged life, come on people...

o LIKE / REPLY

CAZBIT 19 hours ago

**@RUSH2014**They took the iodine out of the salt, and replaced it with Bromine, why?

LIKE / REPLY

SID444 19 hours ago

This is an editorial in Annals of Internal Medicine. Two of the studies used for this editorial were also in Anals of Internal Medicine.

LIKE / REPLY

RUSH2014 19 hours ago

Also, even though I weighed in on this big time. Why are we not talking about all this anti-biotic crap that has actually caused more drug resistant bacteria and the overuse of antibiotics? Why are we keeping our kids from germs but they end up with terrible allergies? We need to live bold and teach our children to. Of course a supplement is not going to get you to 100, but it won't hurt you and will probably help fill in the gaps we all have no matter how well we eat. So take it or don't take it, what doctors want us to save 50 bucks a year all of a sudden?

I mean don't megadose and all that wishful thinking stuff, but study, read, then act on your common sense.

/ LIKE / REPLY

CAZBIT 19 hours ago

**@RUSH2014**You and I are on the same page Rush, Why are we not talking about Fukishima? why are we not talking about the dangers of Factory farming? Why is GMO banned in Europe and Asia, yet they force it on us here and say they don't need to label it? Yet they feel the need to attack the supplement industry? Why are we concerned about global warming when there is 50% more ice at the North pole this year, and not talking about all the outdated Nuclear plants that pose a real threat to the environment? It would seem the powers that be are just keeping us occupied while the real problems grow exponentially.

LIKE / REPLY

SFTOMMY\_012 19 hours ago

Reports conclusion: "These vitamins should not be used for chronic disease prevention."

We're not expecting a vitamin to cure cancer.

We are expecting an all-around healthy approach to getting the nutrition we need, especially those elements our diet might otherwise miss. Even if a multi is just giving us a placebo effect, the mindset is stronger for embracing all the other elements that go with vitamins in a healthy lifestyle.

So far, that approach to maximizing a healthy approach to life has proven it's benefits beyond most doc's dreams or advice.

/ LIKE / REPLY

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CAZBIT 19 hours ago

**@sftommy\_012** Actually massive amounts of vitamin C have been shown to stop cancer.

/ LIKE / REPLY

---

PAREIDOLIA- 19 hours ago

not

LIKE / REPLY

---

CAZBIT 19 hours ago

Didn't CBS report that Mercury is good for children's brains too?

I would bet any money this study was funded by the likes of Merck, Glaxo-Smith Kline, Pfizer, you know chemical companies who disguise their chemicals as medicine?

If this is true, why are the elites, like the royal family, Rockefeller, and their ilk obsessed with vitamins and organic food. Sorry, but I'm not going to eat your GMO, I'm not going to drink your fluoride, and I'm going to keep taking my vitamins. You lose.

/ LIKE / REPLY

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RUSH2014 19 hours ago

**@cazbit** Right on Cazbit, gLAd you are not a sheepl - Don't have a problem with Floride though or Folic acid that is PROVEN to prevent birth defects - humm, wonder why that supplement works..and others are crap?

/ LIKE / REPLY

---

DISPLEASED2 19 hours ago

Again, you can get both fluoride and folic acid with several different fruits and veggies.

LIKE / REPLY

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CAZBIT 19 hours ago

**@displeased2** You willfully ingest Fluoride? You do know it's a poison right? You do know if you put your bare hand in a 50 gal drum of Fluoride, it will kill you right?

I have Thalasemia, which blocks the absorption of protein and nutrients, I have to take mass amounts. So I either eat Literally ALL DAY LONG, or a take vitamins. I know you don't know me, but I've been studying nutrition and vitamins my whole life. I've worked on farms, and with large animal vets and have seen the benefits of vitamins on large animals.

BTW RUSH, Harvard Study says Fluoride causes a 20 point drop in IQ, especially in men. Maybe you should have a problem with it.

0 LIKE / REPLY

DISPLEASED2 19 hours ago

No, my point was that fluoride is naturally occurring in raw fruits and vegetables.

LIKE / REPLY

CAZBIT 19 hours ago

**@displeased2** Natural Fluoride in parsley, etc. IS NOT the Garbage poison they are putting int he water, if you are so concerned with people's health, you would do well to mention that.

LIKE / REPLY

SUKECE 7 hours ago

**@cazbit @displeased2**

Flouride is natural in water supplies and is a NATURAL mineral. Taking a man-made fluoride does not have the same results.

LIKE / REPLY

PAT478 20 hours ago

This study was done on synthetic supplements, and it should come as no surprise that synthetics were found to be ineffective.

A study which reports the differences in outcomes between synthetic supplements and natural ones is the approach that must be taken in order to provide the public with useful information on the topic.

The site SupplementsFromNature.com does a great job in illuminating this issue, and addresses the current state of the nutritional content of the food supply, which is a vitally important part of the overall issue which doesn't receive coverage.

/ LIKE / REPLY

AUBFMET 20 hours ago

My grandfather lived to be 101. Does that mean everybody should throw their vitamins out?

/ LIKE / REPLY

AUBFMET 20 hours ago

(and he never took a vitamin)

LIKE / REPLY

RUSH2014 19 hours ago

**@aubfmet** Once again that is a nice story, but it is does not help decide if a supplement helps or hurts... Unless you can prove people stopped living past 100 when supplements hit the market...

LIKE / REPLY

EYEAMNOTALONE 20 hours ago

Vitamins don't help "well-nourished " people? Fair enough... they aren't missing vitamins and minerals then, right?

"should not be used for chronic disease prevention" Well it doesn't take a rocket scientist or a Doc to know that. But then the questions come in where the study admits to limits like not looking at dementia, or that some stopped following the study protocol and the yes/no on Vit D.

Jurys still out for me... I'll wait for the next study before I drop my routine. If I'm extra busy, not eating as well as I could, couldn't get the load of fresh that well-nourished people need I'll take a multivit to help balance what I could be missing.

If a flu shot is touted "its better than nothing", even though its' lists of shortcomings are long... its better than nothing to take a multivit on occasion.

/ LIKE / REPLY

12 hours ago

**@eyeamnotalone** Know this Naturopath Doctor and he gets sent patients from doctors who no longer can succeed with their patients and then they send their patients to him, when all else fails The doctor and his nature pills can help. He can take a strand of hair and analyze it what the person is lacking.

LIKE / REPLY

ENLIGHTENU 20 hours ago

How is saying "case is closed" science?

/ LIKE / REPLY

DISPLEASED2 20 hours ago

**@enlightenu**I found the "case is closed" statement to be quite arrogant too.

/ LIKE / REPLY

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