



## Vitamin C: More Than Just for Colds

Vitamin C is most popularly known as the go-to anti-oxidant for the flu and common cold. However, it has many other lesser known but powerful roles in the body than just boosting the immune system.

Our happy brain chemicals, the neurotransmitters dopamine and serotonin depend on Vitamin C for their synthesis. Not only do these two provide us with good moods, they also help us to feel motivated and experience pleasure as well as delivering us calming and sleep enhancing effects.

Current research indicates that Vitamin C intake can decrease cancer cell replication and increase the chance of remission. Cardiovascular health is also greatly improved as Vitamin C reduces damage to the blood vessels and can increase vasodilation and there is some early research into the potentially positive effects of vitamin C preventing bone fractures associated with osteoporosis.

Perhaps one of its most significant roles is the enhancement of collagen synthesis. This molecule is the most abundant type of protein in the body and forms the structure of our muscles, tendons, skin and bones. Due to this capability, Vitamin C plays a strong role in wound healing and used topically can reduce damage from sunlight, acne and aging of the skin.

**Another interesting fact about Vitamin C is that it increases the absorption of iron in plant foods, so a good reason to combine our wholefoods that are high in iron with foods rich in vitamin C too.**

One compound that can significantly affect Vitamin C levels in the body is sugar. When there is too much circulating sugar in the blood, Vitamin C will not be able to enter the cell efficiently. Caffeine also reduces Vitamin C levels as well as the other water-soluble vitamins such as folate and the other eight B vitamins. So good to avoid these around meal times if we are looking to get the most out of our foods.

Some of the richest wholefood sources of this super vitamin include goji and inca berries, red capsicum, chilli peppers, grapefruit, kiwi, broccoli, kale, strawberries and brussel sprouts.

Enjoy your week in the kitchen!

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