

# Physicians conclude multivitamins should not be used

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(HealthDay)—Multivitamins do not prevent chronic disease and should not be used by well-nourished adults, according to an editorial published in the Dec. 17 issue of the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

Noting that three studies in this issue showed no evidence of benefit for multivitamin supplements in prevention of chronic disease, Eliseo Guallar, M.D., Dr.P.H., from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore, and colleagues discuss the results of these studies and the continuing use of multivitamin supplements.

The authors note that, despite evidence of no benefit or possible harm, among U.S. adults the use of [multivitamin](#) supplements increased from 30 percent between 1988 and 1994 to 39 percent between 2003 and 2006. Although use of certain individual supplements such as  $\beta$ -carotene

and vitamin E decreased following reports of adverse outcomes in lung cancer and all-cause mortality, sales of multivitamins and other supplements have not been affected by major studies with null results. The U.S. supplement industry is continuing to grow, with annual sales reaching \$28 billion in 2010, with similar trends seen in Europe. For the general population, especially those with no clear evidence of micronutrient deficiencies, most supplements do not prevent chronic disease or death, their use is not justified, and they should not be used.

"Supplementing the diet of well-nourished adults with (most) mineral or [vitamin supplements](#) has no clear benefit and might even be harmful," the authors write.

One author disclosed being a consultant on a [class action lawsuit](#) related to false health claims made by vitamin E manufacturers.

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