

Media Release

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Multivitamins literature review: not the whole story on multivitamins

Mr Carl Gibson, CEO of the Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia (CHC), balanced the responses to the media articles on the recently published study, *'Vitamin and Mineral Supplements in the Primary Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease and Cancer: An Updated Systematic Evidence Review for the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force.'*

"The review in question only looked at studies that researched generally healthy people, avoiding any instances of targeted use of nutrients. In addition, the researchers only looked at studies where supplements were the primary source of prevention, without other healthy lifestyle choices, like exercise and proper sleep, to prevent chronic disease." Mr Gibson said.

"In fact, given the results from the Physicians' Health Study – and from a large number of studies that this review failed to include – the very fact that there is some level of evidence for a simple multivitamin in preventing cancer in healthy people is extremely encouraging."

"If anything, this study highlights the need for academics, government and our industry to support and fund further research to determine the benefits of taking complementary medicines."

The complementary medicine industry is strongly founded in science, with an increasing evidence base, and welcomes further opportunities for support in conducting research and clinical trials. We encourage the new Australian Government to incentivise Research and Development in terms of data protection and market exclusivity. We also ask that the Government commit just 1% of National Health and Medical Research Council project funds to complementary medicine research priorities for 2014-2018.

Mr Gibson went on to say, "We know that multivitamins can fill nutrient gaps, and that many people are not reaching the recommended dietary allowances. Multivitamins should be taken as a part of an integrated health approach, in combination with other healthy lifestyle choices".

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The Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia (CHC)

The CHC is the peak Australian industry body committed to a thriving and sustainable complementary medicines and healthcare products industry. We believe in a holistic healthcare model based on the prevention of illness, long-term community wellness and consumer choice.

Complementary medicines and natural healthcare products cover products such as vitamins, mineral and nutritional supplements, special purpose foods, natural cosmetics, herbal and homoeopathic medicines, and aromatherapy products.

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