

Media Release

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Pregnancy Supplementation Criticism Premature

Mr Carl Gibson, ceo of Complementary Medicines Australia (CMA) has today called into question claims that vitamins are an unnecessary expense for most expectant mothers as “unhelpful and just likely to generate misleading headlines”.

According to the report “*Vitamin supplementation in pregnancy*”ⁱ published in the Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin, vitamins and minerals were unlikely to be needed if the woman had a healthy balanced diet. The report found that much of the evidence cited in support of multivitamins for pregnancy comes from studies in developing countries, with the authors concluding that these findings are not applicable in developed countries.

“Earlier this year, the Australian Bureau of Statistics released the latest figures showing that Australians are eating plenty of food but are still starving of quality nutrients. Based on self-reporting just 6.8 per cent of the population met the recommended intake of vegetables and just over half at 54 per cent met the recommendations for serves of fruit. “

“In an ideal situation, pregnant women would obtain their recommended daily allowance of key nutrients from diet alone, but realistically there are shortfalls in the typical Australian diet. Multivitamins are designed to protect against these shortfalls.

The report authors did recommend supplementation for all women during pregnancy of folic acid and vitamin D. Australia’s Department of Health recommends dietary supplementation with folic acid, from 12 weeks before conception and throughout the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, which reduces the risk of having a baby with a neural tube defect and recommends a dose of 500 micrograms per day.

ENDS

ⁱ Vitamin supplementation in pregnancy. *Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin*. Published online July 11, 2016

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