

Media Release

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A Good Diet and Supplementation Isn't Just Child's Play

Complementary Medicines Australia (CMA) has welcomed the *Fruit, Vegetables and Diet Score Report* published today by the CSIRO as it highlights the need for a focus on improving the dietary patterns of Australian adults, finding that only 51 per cent are eating the recommended intake of fruit and that 66 per cent are not eating enough vegetables.

Carl Gibson, ceo of Complementary Medicines Australia said; "A healthy diet and lifestyle, and supplementation as required, are prerequisites for the prevention of many chronic diseases. Unfortunately, Australians are not consuming a diet that is high in quality nutrients and their health is suffering as a result."

"The impact of a poor diet is increasingly being highlighted by research such as that which was published in the journal *Diabetic Medicine* last year, illuminating that scurvy had been detected in a number of patients at Sydney's Westmead Hospital.ⁱ The authors found that several patients with long-running unhealed wounds were cured by a simple course of vitamin C, and therefore stressed the importance of a diet rich in fresh fruit and vegetables."

"It is perhaps not surprising that in Australia there has been a growing use and acceptance of complementary medicines by individuals keen to care for their general health and wellbeing. Many people take a multivitamin because they know they don't always eat as well as they should," said Mr Gibson.

"Multivitamins can play a role in improving general health and decreasing the risk of chronic disease. For example, the Physicians' Health Study II, which is the largest randomised clinical trial of a multivitamin supplement conducted to date, showed a statistically significant 8 per cent reduction in total cancer incidence in male physicians. The 20 year data in men showed a 44 per cent reduction in cardiovascular disease by taking a good quality multivitamin each day."

Complementary Medicines, including vitamins, minerals and multivitamins, are generally regulated in Australia as Listed, low risk medicines, used for minor self limiting conditions, maintaining health and wellbeing, or the promotion or enhancement of health. Multivitamins, which can contain anywhere from 12-25 plus ingredients per dose, are designed to protect against broad nutritional deficiencies.

ENDS

ⁱ Christie-David, D. J. and Gunton, J. E. (2016), Vitamin C deficiency and diabetes mellitus – easily missed? *Diabet. Med.* Accepted Author Manuscript. doi:10.1111/dme.13287

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