



**For Immediate Release**

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**FAULTY STUDY TARGETS VITAMINS C AND E  
Finding of No Cardiovascular Protection Was Predictable**

Today, the American Association for Health Freedom (AAHF) and its international affiliate, the Alliance for Natural Health (ANH), have together sharply criticized defective and misleading research published earlier this month in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA). The research triggered headlines around the world suggesting that neither vitamin E nor vitamin C supplements protect against cardiovascular disease in older men.

The study by Howard Sesso and colleagues from Harvard, entitled the “Physicians’ Health Study II”, included over 14,600 male physicians over a ten year period, used the least potent form of vitamin E and incorrect dosages of both vitamins C and E, according to an analysis conducted by ANH experts, Dr Steve Hickey, Dr. Damien Downing, and Dr. Robert Verkerk.

The ANH analysis, “Designed to Fail: A Trial Without Meaning”, criticized the Sesso *et al.* study for using synthetic dl-alpha-tocopherol, which is less effective than the natural and more complete forms of vitamin E and is thus more likely to not reveal any benefit. Additionally, the vitamin E dose in the study (400 IU every other day) is far below the dose taken by many who supplement making the findings irrelevant to older supplement consumers who are aware of extensive research and clinical evidence on higher dose vitamin therapy.

The JAMA paper included a 500 mg daily dosage of vitamin C, which is only half of a typical one-gram tablet of the type popular with supplement users. Evidence suggests that dynamic flow levels of vitamin C, which may prevent heart disease, begin at daily intakes above about 3g per day, best delivered in divided doses.

Additional complaints about the JAMA study include the use of an unidentified placebo, which may have included beneficial nutrients such as magnesium, failure to control diet for synergistic nutrient interactions that may have skewed test results, and the relevance, or otherwise, of applying these findings among physicians (the study group) to all men across the population.

*“Considering that the methodologies were significantly biased against finding a positive result from vitamins C and E as determined from both available research and clinical evidence, one has to ask who stands to benefit from these findings? How, for example, would the pharmaceutical industry be impacted from diminished sales of their vitamins if people, under the belief that vitamins provided no benefit in the treatment and prevention of cardiovascular disease, instead chose pricey prescription drugs,”* asked Gretchen DuBeau, AAHF Executive Director.

Dr Damien Downing, ANH Medical Director, President of the British Society of Ecological Medicine and Editor-in-Chief of the peer reviewed journal, the *Journal of Nutritional and Environmental Medicine*, on reading the Sesso *et al.* paper independently responded, saying it was *“an intervention designed to fail”!*

ANH Scientific & Executive Director, Dr Robert Verkerk added, *“With three of the world’s largest drug companies, namely BASF, Wyeth and DSM—formerly Roche—supplying the low dose synthetic vitamins for the study, it’s perhaps not surprising that the outcome is made to look bad for vitamins. A trial like this costs a huge amount of money and is a waste of much needed research funds. Why don’t they ask the people who work with nutrients on a daily basis—integrative medicine doctors—what nutrient forms, combinations and dosages are most likely to work?”*

The ANH analysis, “Designed to Fail: A Trial Without Meaning”, is available at: [http://www.anhcampaign.org/files/081117\\_Sesso\\_PHSII\\_ANHrebuttal.pdf](http://www.anhcampaign.org/files/081117_Sesso_PHSII_ANHrebuttal.pdf).

ENDS.

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## **NOTES TO THE EDITOR**

The ANH analysis, authored by Steve Hickey PhD, Damien Downing MBBS and Robert Verkerk PhD, “Designed to Fail: A Trial Without Meaning”, can be downloaded from: [http://www.anhcampaign.org/files/081117\\_Sesso\\_PHSII\\_ANHrebuttal.pdf](http://www.anhcampaign.org/files/081117_Sesso_PHSII_ANHrebuttal.pdf).

### **About the Alliance for Natural Health (ANH)**

[www.anhcampaign.org](http://www.anhcampaign.org)

The Alliance for Natural Health (ANH) is an international, non-governmental organisation, based in the UK. It was founded in 2002, and works on behalf of consumers, medical doctors, complementary health practitioners and health-product suppliers worldwide, to protect and promote natural healthcare, using the principles of good science and good law.

The ANH’s overriding goal is to help develop appropriate legal and scientific frameworks for the development of sustainable approaches to healthcare. As in the fields of energy and agriculture, sustainable healthcare invariably requires use of natural products which are inherently compatible with human biochemistry and physiology. Within this setting, consumers and health professionals should be able to make informed choices about a wide range of health options, and in particular those that relate to diet, lifestyle, traditional medicinal and non-drug-based or natural therapies, so that they may experience their benefits to the full while avoiding unnecessary risks.

### **About the American Association for Health Freedom (AAHF)**

[www.healthfreedom.net](http://www.healthfreedom.net)

The American Association for Health Freedom (AAHF) is a 501©4 nonprofit organization serving as the politically active voice at federal and state levels to protect Americans’ rights to access integrative medicine and dietary supplements. AAHF protects the right of the consumer to choose and the practitioner to practice by lobbying Congress and state legislature and crafting legislation; acting as a government watchdog and filing comments on proposed rulings; educating the public, press, and decision-makers on integrative medicine; initiating legal activities and joining and forming significant coalitions.