

HEALTHfirst

Your neighbourhood nutrition source

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Ester-C®:

Not just your ordinary Vitamin C

Vitamin C is an important nutrient associated with many health benefits. It has been shown to help protect the health of your heart, joints and eyes. Vitamin C also helps support a healthy immune system - especially important at this time of year.^{1,2}

Which form of vitamin C should you choose for immunity support? There are three types of vitamin C: ordinary ascorbic acid, which may cause stomach upset at high doses; buffered vitamin C, which is ascorbic acid in a salt form, and Ester-C®.

Ester-C® calcium ascorbate is a unique and patented form of vitamin C containing natural metabolites that help it work differently than regular vitamin C. Ester-C® is a "body ready" vitamin C and several studies show that unique structure of Ester-C® makes it more readily absorbed and less rapidly excreted than the acid or salt form of the vitamin. Ester-C® can stay in the body for a full 24-hour period, making the

benefits of vitamin C more available to the body than other forms of vitamin C. Ester-C® is also non-acidic because it is combined with calcium, so it's gentler on the stomach than ascorbic acid and safer on tooth enamel when used in a chewable supplement.

When you want something more than just your ordinary vitamin C, consider supplementing with Ester-C®.

1. Hemilä H, Chalker E, D'Souza RRD, Douglas RM, Treacy. Vitamin C for preventing and treating the common cold. *Cochrane Reviews*. 2005;3.
2. Hemilä H, Vitamin C supplementation and respiratory infections: a systematic review. *Mil Med*. 2004 Nov;169(11):920-5.

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Red Bioflavonoids: Making Ester-C® even better

By Philip Rouchotas, ND

Numerous comparative investigations have demonstrated superior bioavailability, retention, and utilization of Ester-C® vitamin C relative to standard L- ascorbic acid. The addition of red bioflavonoids to this equation creates a truly unique and potent combination.

Continued on page 4



Store Masthead



Your Health First Professionals

The Health First Story: Putting your Health First™

Did you know that your local health food store (listed on the front page of this newsletter) is a part of Canada's leading group of independent health food stores? Known as the **Health First Network**, this group is comprised of **100 stores** from across the country, all dedicated to offering you knowledgeable service and premium quality health products. With the power and resources of a buying group, Health First Network stores offer you many unique advantages that other stores can't.

products on the market, show the results of this team work.

The quality put into all Health First™ supplements completes the story:

- **Quality manufacturing:** All Health First™ supplements are manufactured at facilities that have been approved for a Canadian Natural Health Products (NHP) manufacturing license. This ensures that the facility is approved and inspected by Health Canada and conforms to strict industry GMP (Good Manufacturing Practices) standards.
- **Comfort:** It's nice to know that Health First Network members themselves have inspected the primary manufacturing plant where Health First™ products are made – they know the quality behind their own products and are proud to recommend them to you and your family.
- **Verification:** Raw materials in all Health First™ products are tested for identification, purity, potency and microbial safety prior to manufacturing and finished products are tested again to ensure safety and conformance to label claims.

One of the advantages that the Health First Network brings you is its exclusive Health First™ brand of supplements. As a group of health professionals, Health First Network members are so deeply committed to offering quality products that they have developed their very own brand of supplements.

In conjunction with leading Canadian supplement manufacturers, health professionals from within the Health First Network stores - including nutritionists, pharmacists, Chinese herbal doctors, homeopaths and naturopaths - have put their expertise into the Health First™ formulations that keep you healthy. Innovative products such as Health First™ Ester-C® Berry Supreme capsules, one of the most effective vitamin C

HEALTH FIRST Advisory Panel

Philip Rouchotas, ND

Dr. Rouchotas is the Professor of Clinical Nutrition at the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine, Scientific Evaluator, and operates a Naturopathic practice in Ontario. He is a graduate of the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine, preceded by a Masters Degree and Honors Bachelor of Science degree, both specialized in Nutritional Sciences.



Juan Wong, Lph.

Juan is the owner of Ki Nature & Santé with locations in Montreal and Pointe Claire. He is a pharmacist with extensive experience in alternative health therapies and a proud member of the Health First Network.



Alicja Wojewnik-Smith, MSc

Along with her Masters of Science in Microbiology, Alicja has more than 20 years of experience in the Canadian health product industry working with several major companies. Her expertise in the category, earned her an appointment to the national transition team of experts working with the Canadian government in developing new regulations for the industry. She founded the consulting firm Dicentra Inc. in 2001 to assist companies with science, formulations, regulatory compliance, quality standards and product claims for natural products.



New Health Product Regulations

by Alicja Wojewnik-Smith, MSc

What do they mean to you?

You may not be aware of it but in 2004 the Natural Health Products (NHP) Directorate, a department of Health Canada, introduced the NHP Regulations. Through these new regulations Health Canada ensures that all Canadians have ready access to natural health products that are safe, effective and of high quality. Every process involved in the production, distribution and marketing of an NHP has to be reviewed by the government to ensure that the end-product is safe and effective. If all procedures are in compliance with the regulations the government issues the product a Natural Product Number (NPN). You may have already noticed this at your local health store. Some products may have the statement "NPN pending" printed on the label, signifying that the product has been submitted to the government for review and is awaiting acceptance. Some products may even already have an NPN issued. The new regulations also allow manufacturers to print

claims for use on their label. For example, a fish oil-containing product can now have a statement such as "for the reduction of serum triglycerides" printed on its label.

What does all this mean? The new regulations are unique on an international scale. They recognize the importance of NHPs in maintaining the health of Canadians.

As a consumer you must take advantage of this! An NPN-pending or NPN-issued product is an indication that the manufacturer took great care in producing a safe and effective product. A product without an NPN could be an indication that the product lacks quality or efficacy. Read the claims as well! Whether you are looking for a natural alternative to enhance the health of your heart or for something to aid digestion, the new regulations and the presence of label claims that come with it will make your next visit to the health food store a lot easier!

Fish Oil Supplements: What you need to know

Despite decades of research on the cardiovascular and cognitive benefits of Omega-3 fatty acids from fish oil, most of the media and health-conscious consumers have only recently become aware of the benefits of Omega-3 supplementation.

With so many fish oil supplements on the market, how does a consumer select a quality product? Here are three things you should consider:

- 1. Safety:** As our environment becomes increasingly polluted, the fish we consume can contain such harmful contaminants as heavy metals, mercury, dioxins and PCB's (polychlorinated biphenyls). Fish oils need to be cleaned by steam or molecular distillation to remove these contaminants, followed by testing to confirm safety. Ask your health retailer whether the product you are buying has been tested to meet CRN (Council for Responsible Nutrition) safety standards, which go beyond governmental regulations. Some brands of fish oil indicate compliance to CRN standards on the label.
- 2. Omega-3 potency:** It's not the quantity of fish oil in a supplement that matters; it's the Omega-3 content. Check product labels for the actual Omega-3 content of your fish oil.

Look for EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) and DHA (docosahexaenoic acid) content specifically, the most important Omega-3's. Concentrated forms of fish oil can contain over 400 mg of EPA and 200 mg of DHA in a single capsule.

- 3. Freshness:** It's important to know that your fish oil is fresh to ensure you're getting maximum Omega-3 content. Besides checking the expiry date when buying the product, check the label to see whether there is a natural antioxidant – such as vitamin E, rosemary or ascorbyl palmitate - to help preserve the oil. You can also check with your health retailer as to whether the manufacturer tests the product for peroxide value, an indication of the oil's freshness.

An easy way to find out more about your fish oil supplement is by checking the IFOS (International Fish Oil Standards) website. An independent laboratory located at the University of Guelph conducts IFOS testing on fish oil supplements in Canada. On their website you can see many popular brands and their test results for the issues discussed in this article: safety, Omega-3 potency and freshness. You can visit the website at: http://www.nutrasource.ca/ifos_new/index.cfm?section=ifosconsumer



The Power of Plant Sterols: Fine-tuning your immune system

Phytosterols are plant "fats" present in all plants including fruits and vegetables. For both the plants that produce them and humans that consume them, phytosterols act to balance immunity and increase resistance to disease.

Unfortunately for humans, phytosterols are poorly absorbed through our diet, causing an imbalance in our bodies between plant fats (phytosterols) and the animal fats (cholesterol) which many of us consume in over-abundance. This imbalance results in some of the most serious health issues we face today, including a weakened immune system and high LDL (low-density lipids) cholesterol. Studies show that supplementing with a phytosterol formula is

an effective way to balance the immune system and may help to lower the risk of LDL cholesterol.

What quantity of phytosterols should you consume to effectively balance your immunity? Research suggests supplementing with at least 60 mg of the phytosterol beta sitosterol and 0.6 mg of beta sterolins per day, although phytosterols are safe at higher doses. Beta sitosterol and beta sterolins are specific phytosterols that work together to balance the immune system – assisting people with overactive (those with autoimmune diseases) and under active immune systems to bring their systems into proper alignment.



Omega-First Super-Strength
Take it to heart!

Omega-First Capsules are super-concentrated to contain an incredible 700 mg of the important Omega-3's, EPA and DHA (450 mg and 250 mg respectively). Molecular distilled and tested to meet CRN (Council for Responsible Nutrition) safety standards for heavy metals, mercury, dioxins and PCB's. Lemon-flavoured to prevent fishy after-taste.



Immuno-First Phytosterol Formula
Immunity made easy!

A convenient one-per-day phytosterol formula! Each Immuno-First capsule supplies 60 mg of Beta Sitosterol and 4.5 mg of Beta Sterolins sourced from non-GMO soy. Phytosterols have been studied for their ability to balance the immune system. Vegetarian suitable formula.

INCREDIBLE OFFER!
\$2.99
LIMITED QUANTITIES!



ESTER-C® 300 mg
30 Chewable Tablets

The “berry” best tasting Ester-C®

Contains 300 mg of readily-absorbed, non-acidic Vitamin C together with powerful organic Red Bioflavonoids. All-natural sweeteners, colours and flavours.

Be one of the first 24 customers to visit your local Health First Network store with this coupon and receive a bottle of Health First™ Ester-C® Berry Supreme Chewable Tablets. Regular price is \$5.99.

Limit 1 coupon per item per purchase. Offer available at Health First Network stores only. Coupon cannot be combined with any other special offers. Coupon may be redeemed for regular priced merchandise. March 31, 2006.

Red Bioflavonoids, continued from page 1

A common myth exists regarding the antioxidant properties of vitamin C. The vitamin indeed delivers antioxidant protection, but this protection is modest relative to other molecules in nature. The principal basis for consuming supplemental Ester-C® is to provide the body with a highly bioavailable form of the vitamin, such that it can function as a vitamin within the body. When vitamin C is required to act as an antioxidant, it is “consumed” by such processes, making it unavailable to perform its intended biological functions; development of cartilage/ bone/ teeth, vascular integrity, wound healing, endogenous carnitine synthesis, metabolism of the amino acid tyrosine, synthesis of various neurotransmitters, and cholesterol degradation, just to name a few.

Enter red bioflavonoids. The most powerful antioxidant nutrients known are derived from fruits; specifically berries; and more specifically, from dark (red, purple) berries. Concentrates of red bioflavonoids deliver an unparalleled level of antioxidant protection and have been clinically researched in humans for the treatment of a wide variety of malignant diseases, as well as for advanced vascular disease.

Ester-C® delivers a highly bioavailable, readily assimilated form of vitamin C. Red bioflavonoids offer powerful antioxidant protection, freeing vitamin C from demands as an antioxidant and allowing it to perform as a facilitator of essential metabolic processes. Combining red bioflavonoids with Ester-C® will ensure you get the most out of your Ester-C®.



EXPERT ADVICE

By Juan Wong, Lph.

from the Health First Network: A Recipe for...Immunity

The first rule of thumb I share with my clients is to maintain a well-balanced diet. They should try to eat plenty of fresh fruit, vegetables, legumes and at least once or twice a week, organic meat, poultry, fish or seafood. I also advise drinking 6-8 glasses of water per day, including some green tea if desired. Daily exercise and plenty of good sleep are also essential in boosting the immune system.

and antioxidants) are perfect when you feel tired and overworked.

- Immuno-First is an amazing combination of Beta Sterols and Sterolins. A specifically designed product for the immune system, it works very well for chronic and repetitive infections, allergies, bronchitis and asthma.

For the immune system, there are three basic products that I like to work with:

- Ester-C® Berry Supreme is one of my favourites for the fall and winter!
- Multi-First Multi-Vitamins (with minerals

Start the treatment by taking two Ester-C Berry Supreme capsules and two Multi-First capsules before breakfast and one capsule of Immuno-First in the morning on an empty stomach and one at bedtime. Continue the protocol for 4 weeks, after which the dosage should be reduced in half for 2-4 months. Always consult with a health practitioner.

Ester-C®
Berry Supreme
600 mg



Berry best vitamin C!

Contains 600 mg of the patented, easily-absorbed and non-acidic Vitamin C per capsule. Health First's Ester-C® Berry Supreme also features 100 mg of organic Red Bioflavonoids. Red Bioflavonoids offer a wider range of polyphenols than the more common citrus bioflavonoids – making for superior antioxidant protection and a better Ester-C® formula for you!

HEALTH FIRST™

Your neighbourhood nutrition source

Look for our Health First Sale Flyer