Research Update:
Vitamin C and Exercise

Vitamin C has been in the news for the past week or so with three new studies published on the benefits and hazards of vitamin C. In my opinion, the research breaks down to the really good, the possibly good, and the folly of researchers when publishing results. For the next six messages, I’m going to review these studies on vitamin C, starting with research interpretation gone wrong and the possible good news on vitamin C. Next week it will be all about vitamin C and cancer.

Let’s begin with a study examining the effects of vitamin C and E on the training effects in a group of 54 runners. For 11 weeks, half were given 1,000 mg vitamin C and 235 mg (520 IU) every day, with the remaining half getting a placebo every day. All runners were put on a severe interval training program to see what changes in fitness and endurance occurred. The researchers also took muscle biopsies and blood samples and tested for dozens of factors that could affect the increase in the number of mitochondria, the powerhouse of the cells, which would typically increase in number as a result of the training.

What happened? On Thursday I’ll let you know what hit the press and what really might have happened.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

Reference: J Physiol. 2014 Feb 3. [Epub ahead of print]