

Aloe Vera Increases Absorption of Vitamins E, C

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SCRANTON, Pa.--Aloe vera appears to increase absorption of vitamins E and C by slowing the nutrients' assimilation and prolonging concentrations in blood plasma, according to a study published in *Phytomedicine* (12, 10:760-5, 2005).

Researchers assessed the plasma bioavailability of the vitamins in normal fasting subjects, with eight subjects for vitamin C and 10 subjects for vitamin E. In a random crossover design, the subjects consumed either 500 mg of vitamin C as ascorbic acid or 420 mg of vitamin E acetate alone (control), or a combination of the vitamins with 2 oz of two different aloe preparations (a whole leaf extract, or an inner fillet gel). Blood was collected periodically up to 24 hours after consumption. Plasma was analyzed for ascorbate and tocopherol by high performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) with ultraviolet radiation detection.

Researchers found only aloe vera gel caused a significant increase in plasma ascorbate after eight and 24 hours. Compared to controls, only the aloes produced a significant increase in plasma tocopherol after six and eight hours. Both aloes were significantly different from the control after eight hours, and the aloe vera gel was significantly different from the baseline after 24 hours. The aloe vera gel and aloe leaf preparation slowed down absorption of the vitamins equally, with maximum concentrations two to four hours later than the control.

The study results indicate aloe gel and extract improve the absorption of both vitamins C and E by slowing vitamin absorption and prolonging plasma concentrations of the vitamins. According to the study authors, aloe vera is the only known supplement to increase the absorption of vitamins C and E, and should be considered a complement to them.