

PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

26th March 2010



NEW ANH STUDY SAYS EURO VITAMIN LAWS MUST CHANGE TRACK

Alliance for Natural Health study says risk-benefit approach needed for vitamin and mineral food supplements

A study just published in a leading peer reviewed journal explains how the European Commission's proposed approach to limiting maximum doses of vitamins and minerals in food supplements across Europe is not scientifically rational. This is the second review study on the subject authored by Robert Verkerk PhD, executive and scientific director of international campaign organisation, the Alliance for Natural Health (ANH).

The study has been published in the journal, *Toxicology*, the official journal of the British Toxicology Society and the German Toxicology Society. It is published in the same journal just two months after an in-depth review of the scientific methods being considered by European authorities, co-authored by Dr Verkerk, along with Dr Steve Hickey of Staffordshire University, UK.

This latest study evaluates the relationships between the risks and benefits of two vitamins and two minerals and shows that the conversion of risk-based approaches being contemplated by European authorities into law will deny the majority of people from consuming beneficial quantities of vitamins and minerals.

Dr Verkerk explains, *"The problem is that risks and benefits for most nutrients actually overlap. If you exclude all risks in the majority through statutory limitation as is planned under the second phase of the EU Food Supplements Directive, you literally prevent people from accessing products containing levels that are good for them. You might stave off deficiency diseases, but you would also prevent many people from managing their health naturally. If we applied the same approach to wheat, dairy or peanuts, governments would have to ban these staples."*

Using extensive examples and referencing to other published studies, the paper shows that the methods used by European authorities must be related to individual forms of vitamins and minerals, and not be developed as blanket levels applying to all forms of a given vitamin or mineral.

"A good example of this, considered in detail in the paper, is that of folate," continues Verkerk. *"There are more and more data pointing to health risks from long-term supplementation with more than 1000 micrograms daily of the synthetic form of folate, folic acid, that's widely used in cheaper supplements. But the natural, non-reduced forms as found in green-leaved vegetables have a much wider range of*

Alliance for Natural Health International
The Atrium, Curtis Road, Dorking, Surrey RH4 1XA, UK
e-mail: info@anhcampaign.org tel: +44 (0)1306 646 600

www.anhinternational.org

benefits, and are known to exert their benefits when consumed in significantly larger amounts.”

The paper also looks in detail at the anomalous case of fluoride and shows that the European legislative approach to fluoride in supplements, or indeed government approaches to the water fluoridation programmes specific to Ireland and parts of the UK, go contrary to the principles of risk management applied elsewhere. Given the risks of fluoride to young children, Verkerk argues that it is remarkable that mass treatment of public drinking water is still allowed while the European Food Safety Authority continues to green light various forms of fluoride in supplements.

Verkerk’s study argues forcefully that legislation on maximum levels of vitamins and minerals should not proceed until new methods involving consideration of both vitamins and minerals are developed. Accordingly, the paper ends with the following advice to European authorities, given around 200 years ago by the third President of the United States of America, Thomas Jefferson, “*delay is preferable to error*”.

ENDS.

CONTACT

For further information, please contact ANH Campaign Administrator, Sophie Middleton, tel +44(0)1306 646 600 or email info@anhinternational.org.

EDITOR’S NOTES

About the article

The full reference to the ‘Epub ahead of print’ article is as follows:

Verkerk, R.H.J., The paradox of overlapping micronutrient risks and benefits obligates risk/benefit analysis. *Toxicology* (2010), doi:10.1016/j.tox.2010.02.011

The article can be accessed electronically from:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tox.2010.02.011>

About ANH International

www.anhinternational.org

www.anh-europe.org

www.anh-usa.org

Alliance for Natural Health International is an internationally active non-governmental organisation working towards protecting and promoting natural approaches to healthcare. ANH-Intl campaigns across a wide range of fields, including for freedom of choice and the use of micronutrients and herbal products in healthcare. It also operates campaigns that aim to restrict mass fluoridation of water supplies and the use of genetically modified foods. Through its work particularly in Europe (www.anh-europe.org) and the USA (www.anh-usa.org), the ANH works to accomplish its mission through its unique application of 'good science' and 'good law'. The organisation was founded in 2002 by Dr Robert Verkerk, an internationally acclaimed expert in sustainability, who has headed the organisation since this time. ANH-Intl is working collaboratively with a wide range of scientists, lawyers, medical doctors, health practitioners, politicians and consumers, to help facilitate the development of scientific and legal frameworks appropriate to natural and sustainable healthcare.

Additional Press Release

The following (related) release has been issued simultaneously by **Voice of Irish Concern for the Environment (VOICE)**:

'Fluoride risks to children in Ireland highlighted by new review in Toxicology journal'

This release can be viewed using the following link:

<http://voiceireland.org/water/fluoridation/fluoride-risks-to-children-in-ireland-highlighted-by-new-review-in-toxicology-journal/>