

Vitamin B3 Supplement May Lower Skin Cancer Risk, Study Finds

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- *A new analysis of scientific research found that [vitamin B3](#) may lower your risk of the most common type of cancer in the U.S.*
- *Researchers found that people who took vitamin B3 twice a day for at least 30 days had 14 percent fewer new [skin cancers](#).*
- *Here's what this study means for you, and how you should think about the role of B3 in your diet.*

Skin cancer is the [most common](#) type of cancer in the U.S., so it makes sense to want to do everything in your power to lower your risk of developing it. And while wearing sunscreen is always a good way to go, new research suggests that taking a certain over-the-counter supplement may also help lower your risk of skin cancer, too.

Yep, vitamin B3, also known as nicotinamide or niacinamide, is the focus of the new analysis, which was published in [JAMA Dermatology](#). The findings don't suggest that everyone should start taking a B3 supplement, but they do raise some questions about this vitamin's role in reducing skin cancer risk. Here's what dermatologists and a nutritionist want you to know about this study and what it might mean for you.

Meet the experts: Scott Keatley, RD, of [Keatley Medical Nutrition Therapy](#); [Gary Goldenberg](#), MD, is a assistant clinical professor of dermatology at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai Hospital; [Tanya Evans](#), MD, is a dermatologist and medical director of the Skin Cancer Program at the Melanoma Clinic at MemorialCare Saddleback Medical Center in Laguna Hills, CA.

What did the study find?

The study was pretty simple. Researchers analyzed health records from nearly 34,000 American veterans and discovered that those who took 500 milligrams twice a day of nicotinamide for at least 30 days had 14 percent less new skin cancers than those who didn't take the OTC supplement.

"The results of this study suggest that use of nicotinamide is associated with a reduced risk of skin cancer development," the researchers wrote in the conclusion.

What is vitamin B3?

Vitamin B3 is a water-soluble vitamin. This particular study looked at nicotinamide, which is a type of B3. "Nicotinamide plays a role in cellular energy metabolism, specifically in replenishing [NAD+](#) which is a molecule your cells use to repair DNA damage," explains Scott Keatley, RD, of [Keatley Medical Nutrition Therapy](#).

"It lowers inflammation in the body and people use it to lower cholesterol, but it also helps in acne, rosacea, and eczema," says [Tanya Evans](#), MD, dermatologist and medical director of the Skin Cancer Program at the Melanoma Clinic at MemorialCare Saddleback Medical Center in Laguna Hills, CA. "The added benefit is that it can be [used for anti-aging](#). Since, it boosts the DNA repair from UV light, it is a great supplement for fighting wrinkles."

This supplement can be purchased over-the-counter.

More On Skin Serums, Supps, and Vitamins

-  [Niacinamide Vs. Vitamin C: Which Is Better?](#)
-  [The Anatomy of a Vitamin C Serum](#)
-  [Everything There Is To Know About Hydroquinone](#)

How does B3 help prevent skin cancer?

There are a few ways B3 may help lower the risk of skin cancer. “It’s been shown that nicotinamide helps boost the DNA repair mechanism after UV exposure,” Dr. Evans says. “This reduces the mutation rate of the cells.”

Nicotinamide may also help reduce inflammation and oxidative stress in skin cells, both of which are linked to the development of cancer, says [Gary Goldenberg](#), MD, assistant clinical professor of dermatology at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai Hospital.

How much B3 should I take every day?

You probably already know this, but it doesn't hurt to repeat it: It's never a good idea to start taking a new supplement without checking in with a healthcare provider first. So, if you're interested in adding B3 to your routine, it's worth talking to your doctor or a dietitian first, just to be safe.

Keatley points out that this particular study looked at taking 1,000 milligrams of nicotinamide a day. "This is much higher than the daily requirement for vitamin B3 in the diet, which is 14 to 16 milligrams," he says. "We're not at the point where I'd tell the general population to start supplementing at those levels."

Keatley calls the research into nicotinamide "encouraging" but suggests talking to your dermatologist if you have a personal history of skin cancer.

What are the best B3 supplements?

If you and your healthcare provider decide that nicotinamide is a good option for you, there are a few supplements experts recommend looking into.

Dr. Evans suggests [Heliocare](#), which is an herbal supplement that also contains nicotinamide. [Thorne](#) and [Pure Encapsulations](#) are also reputable options, per Keatley.

Vitamin B3 Supplements



Heliocare Heliocare Advanced Niacin B3 Supplement: Fernblock PLE Extract 240mg Per Serving - Supports Skin Cell Health W/Antioxidant Rich Vitamin B3 Niacin 500 mg - 120 Vegan Capsules

[\\$40 at Amazon](#)



THORNE THORNE NiaCel 400, NAD Supplement

[\\$64 at Amazon](#)

[\\$70 at Walmart](#)



Pure Encapsulations Pure Encapsulations Niacinamide

[\\$19 at Amazon](#)

[\\$19 at Walmart](#)

“But again, this should be [taken] under medical guidance—particularly at the studied dose,” Keatley says.

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Korin Miller is a freelance writer specializing in general wellness, sexual health and relationships, and lifestyle trends, with work appearing in Men’s Health, Women’s Health, Self, Glamour, and more. She has a master’s degree from American University, lives by the beach, and hopes to own a teacup pig and taco truck one day.

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