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**WHAT ABOUT TAKING VITAMIN E OR OTHER ANTIOXIDANT SUPPLEMENTS TO REDUCE CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE RISK?**

A review of research studies published between 1994 and 2002 failed to find any clear benefit of routine antioxidant supplementation to prevent or treat cardiovascular disease (CVD); several studies suggested that use of antioxidant supplementation could be harmful. Based on this, the American Heart Association's position is to not recommend supplementation, but instead to promote a healthy diet including the intake of fruits and vegetables, which are associated with decreased CVD risk.

**CAN YOU PROVIDE EXAMPLES OF PRODUCTS CONTAINING PLANT STANOLS AND STEROLS?**

Products are currently available that are margarine substitutes, or spreads, containing either plant stanol or sterol esters. One is Benecol<sup>®</sup> (either regular or light), which contains plant stanol esters. Another product, which is also a spread, is Take Control<sup>®</sup>, which contains plant sterol esters from soybean extract. It is recommended that the individual consume two to four 1-tbsp servings each day of these.

**RECOMMENDED READING**

American Heart Association. Antioxidant vitamins. American Heart Association Web site. Available at: <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=4452>. Accessed December 7, 2005.

Kritharides L, Stocker R. The use of antioxidant supplements in coronary heart disease. *Atherosclerosis*. 2002;164:211-219.

McNeil Nutritionals, LLC. BENECOL<sup>®</sup> Spreads. Benecol<sup>®</sup> Web site. Available at: [http://www.benecol.com/products/index.jhtml;jsessionid=WBV1WAXMIBJ5GCQPCB3SUYYKB2IIWNSC?id=benecol/products/pr\\_spreads.inc](http://www.benecol.com/products/index.jhtml;jsessionid=WBV1WAXMIBJ5GCQPCB3SUYYKB2IIWNSC?id=benecol/products/pr_spreads.inc). Accessed December 7, 2005.

Unilever. How to be heart healthy. Take Control<sup>®</sup> Web site. Available at: <http://www.takecontrol.com/getknow.htm>. Accessed December 7, 2005.