



May prevent infection

## Antioxidants

### What are Antioxidants?

Antioxidants are nutrients that may reduce cell damage from free radicals. Free radicals are formed when compounds in the body combine with oxygen. Antioxidants work as scavengers; gathering up these harmful free radicals and helping to prevent cell damage. Antioxidants may prevent or reduce infection. Some examples of antioxidants are: vitamins A, E, and C and the mineral zinc.

### How Do I Maintain or Improve My Intake?

- Eat foods that are naturally high in antioxidants
- Take my CF-specific multivitamins as recommended  
Brand \_\_\_\_\_  
Dose \_\_\_\_\_
- Take my vitamins with foods and, if prescribed, enzymes
- Other Actions \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Why Should I Care?

Antioxidants are best known for their role in reducing cell “stress,” meaning that they may help prevent or reduce infection. Persons who have CF may be at risk for increased “stress” in their lungs. Getting enough antioxidants may help reduce inflammation or help the body fight infection by neutralizing free radicals.



## Antioxidants

### What Antioxidants Do I Need Daily and How Much?

There are no specific antioxidant recommendations. It’s important to eat a wide variety of foods, especially fruits and vegetables, to get many types of antioxidants. Eating a variety of foods provides the antioxidant vitamins A, C, E, and the mineral zinc.

### What are Good Sources of Antioxidants?

Antioxidants are found in many of the dark green and brightly colored fruits and vegetables, some sources are listed below. Most of the CF-specific multivitamins have the important antioxidants vitamins A (beta-carotene), C, E, and the mineral zinc.

#### Vitamin A and Carotenoids

Kale, broccoli, collards, carrots, squash, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, peaches, apricots, cantaloupe – the brightly colored fruits and vegetables and dark green, leafy vegetables.

#### Vitamin C (Ascorbic acid)

Oranges, limes and grapefruit; strawberries; green, red and orange peppers; tomatoes; broccoli; citrus fruit juices; and certain brightly colored and dark green, leafy vegetables.

#### Vitamin E

Vegetable oils, nuts, sunflower seeds, wheat germ, avocado, and fortified cereals.

#### Zinc

Eastern oysters, fortified cereals, wheat germ, and meat.

### Can I Get Too Many Antioxidants?

You can’t get too many antioxidants from food, but it is possible to get too many from supplements. Work with your CF Healthcare Team to decide the right amount of antioxidants that come from supplemental vitamins and zinc.

This educational service is brought to you by the manufacturers of MVW Complete Formulation® Multivitamin Pediatric Drops, Chewables and Softgels, addressing both routine dosing and step increases as outlined in the CF Foundation’s 2012 Guidelines. The information contained in this card is not meant to replace the medical advice of your CF Healthcare Team.