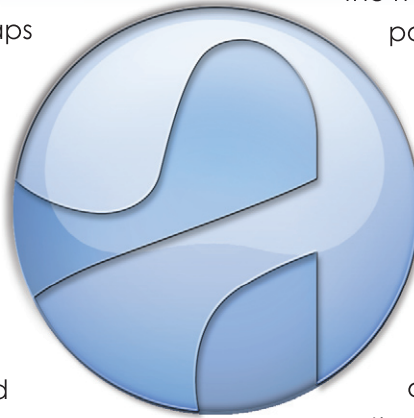


Antioxidants

ANTIOXIDANTS

Oxidation Anxiety

Everyone is worried about oxidation, but most of us don't even realize what it is. Perhaps the most vivid example of oxidation—and something we've all seen—is the rusting of metal. Oxidation is a chemical process in which electrons from one molecule are transferred to an oxygen-containing molecule. It occurs all around us, and inside us, all the time. Oxidation reactions are critical for sustaining life in all plants and animals, but they can also be a harmful force to living organisms. Oxygen is a highly reactive molecule that damages living organisms by producing reactive oxygen species—commonly known as free radicals.



The Danger of Free Radicals

Free radicals are atoms or groups of atoms with an odd, or unpaired, number of electrons that are produced when oxygen interacts with certain molecules. Once formed, they can endanger health by causing chain reactions throughout the cells of the body. Due to its odd number of electrons, a free radical is inherently unstable. In an attempt to gain stability, it "attacks" other molecules to steal an electron, thereby creating another free radical in its wake. The chief danger of free radicals stems from the damage they can do when they react with important cellular components such as DNA or the cell membrane. Cells damaged in this way may die or function poorly, leading to greater health complications.

Your Body Is Prepared

The human body is an amazing organism that comes equipped to deal with most of the issues it will face throughout life. Through many natural processes, it is capable of dealing with and

eliminating free radicals; but it needs the right fuel—antioxidants—to do so. Antioxidants are found in varying amounts in foods such as fresh vegetables and fruits. Often times, the more colorful the food, the more potential antioxidant strength it possesses. Unfortunately, the processed, frozen and canned foods that make up the majority of our diets are often lacking in these vital nutrients, as the cooking and packaging process destroys most antioxidants.

Antioxidants to the Rescue

Early biological research on the role of antioxidants focused on preventing the oxidation of unsaturated fats, which cause rancidity. The discovery that vitamins A, C and E act as antioxidants revolutionized the field and led to the realization of the important role of antioxidants in living organisms. Antioxidants are intimately involved in the prevention of cellular damage—a common cause for a variety of degenerative and other diseases. Antioxidant molecules can safely interact with free radicals before vital molecules are harmed; and as antioxidants themselves are oxidized in the process, they halt the chain reaction of cellular damage.

Oxygen is one of the great paradoxes of life; we must have it, but it has the potential to harm our bodies. Antioxidants help us use this vital substance without the risk of cellular damage. Nature's Sunshine offers some of the most powerful antioxidant supplements on the market to protect your body from free radicals and keep you feeling your best.

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