

Taking Health to the Next Level with Intravenous Vitamin C

By Guy DaSilva, MD, ABAARM

As a society, we've accepted that growing old means getting a disease. We believe that we're prisoners of our genes, destined to inherit the fate of our parents. And more than ever, cancer is an expected part of the aging process.

In reality, we can live well into our 100s without disease, sickness or cancer. Our immune systems have the ability to keep us healthy into old age, but only if they are strong enough.

One way to promote optimal immune system function is through high doses of intravenous vitamin C (IVC). For over six decades, IVC therapy has been proven to treat and cure infection and disease. I have experienced its remarkable effects on patients with everything from influenza to terminal stage IV ovarian cancer.

This article will address how IVC boosts the immune system to fight disease and infection, the mechanics behind IVC's ability to kill cancer cells, cost and side effects of IVC compared to traditional cancer therapies, how IVC can work in conjunction with other cancer treatments, cultural trends in IVC, and controversy associated with its use.

Background

Vitamin C (ascorbic acid) is a water-soluble vitamin used by the body to form collagen in bones, cartilage, muscle and blood vessels, and also aids in the absorption of iron. Nutritional deficiency of vitamin C causes scurvy, which can lead to sudden death.¹

While we manage to fend off scurvy through diet and supplements, we are vitamin C deficient. Nobel Prize-winning physiologist Albert Szent-Gyorgyi, who is credited for discovering vitamin C, explained it best when he said, "The medical profession itself took a very narrow and very wrong view. Lack of ascorbic acid caused scurvy, so if there was no scurvy there was no lack of ascorbic acid... The only trouble was that scurvy is not a first symptom of a lack but a final collapse, a premortal syndrome and there is a very wide gap between scurvy and full health."²

Even if we eat oranges by the bag, we no longer absorb nutrients like we should. Years of immune system destruction from antibiotics overuse have increased intestinal permeability (leaky gut syndrome), and a diet heavy in nutrient-sparse foods due to lack of crop rotation, accelerated crop turnover, and topsoil reductions have robbed us of nutrition.

IVC and Conventional Cancer Treatments

IVC may be a safer, more cost-efficient option when compared to the high price, both financially and physically, of traditional treatments.

The Riordan Clinic Research Institute, with 15 years of clinical experience giving over 30,000 onsite IVC treatments, reported that side effects of high-dose IVC are rare.⁴ Aside from known complications in patients with renal impairment or glucose 6 phosphate dehydrogenase deficiency, high-dose IVC is regarded as a safe treatment option.¹¹

The primary side effects my patients experience are increased thirst and hunger, which can be thwarted by consuming food and fluids before and during treatment. These effects are minute compared to the long list of destructive side effects attached to chemotherapy and radiation.

To compare cost, a single 75,000 mg dose of IVC, which is what I recommend for cancer treatment, will run a patient under \$300. A chemotherapy dosing regimen can ring up to around \$30,000.¹²

But IVC need not be an all or nothing option. While it is effective as a stand-alone therapy, IVC works well in conjunction with chemotherapy and radiation, and may reduce side effects, enhance quality of life and help preserve immunocompetence.⁴

Oncologist Victor Marcial, MD, uses IVC alongside radiation therapy. He said, "Vitamin C has two effects. It increases the beneficial effects of radiation and chemotherapy and decreases the adverse effects. But this is not a subtle effect, is not 15-20%, it's a dramatic effect. Once you start using IV vitamin C, the effect is so dramatic that it is difficult to go back to not using it."¹³

Cultural Trends

Aside from its use by Complementary and Alternative Medicine practitioners, IVC has currently seen a spike in use among those seeking its prophylactic benefits. I regularly see patients who choose to proactively prevent cancer, boost immunity during flu season or recharge after a time of stress. Even athletes enjoy the boost of energy that these "IV cocktails" provide before a big game or tennis match.

IVC is gaining popularity with celebrities as well, including pop singer Rihanna and television personality Simon Cowell, who reportedly both use IV drips containing vitamin C, vitamin B12, magnesium and zinc to increase energy and curb fatigue. Simon Cowell refers to the vitamin injections as a miracle for boosting energy levels and "indescribable" in terms of their calming effect.¹⁴

IVC Controversy


If IVC is so remarkable, it begs to ask why more doctors aren't including it in their toolbox of treatment options. The FDA has made it difficult for physicians and IVC suppliers, possibly because vitamin C is not patented, thus it will not go through the standard FDA approval process.

The use of IVC has long been under the scrutiny of the medical community as well. Even Dr Klenner's achievement in curing polio was swept under the rug. According to Robert Landwehr, "Klenner's cure never became well known and today has sunk almost into oblivion... To this day it is mainstream medicine's position that there is no cure for Polio." Dr Klenner said, "To those who say that Polio is without cure, I say that they lie. Polio in the acute form can be cured in 96 hours or less. I beg of someone in authority to try it."¹⁵

Dr Pauling and Dr Cameron's cancer therapy research has also been overlooked due to a clinical trial conducted by the Mayo Clinic. Contradictory findings reported that no therapeutic value was shown in vitamin C. The reason? While similar doses of vitamin C were used in both studies, Mayo Clinic used only oral doses, whereas Dr Pauling and Dr Cameron used both intravenous and oral doses.¹⁶

There's a reason why the study failed. According to the Riordan IVC protocol, "Oral vitamin C does not produce a blood level high enough to kill cancer cells. From our studies, we concluded that tumor cells become susceptible to high-dose vitamin C at plasma levels of 350 to 400 mg/dL, where redox cycling creates cellular peroxidation. This pro-oxidant effect of IVC induces apoptosis in catalase-deficient cancer cells while sparing non-cancerous cells from oxidative damage."¹⁴ Unfortunately,

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Instead, we live “paycheck to paycheck” by the recommended daily allowance (RDA), an amount high enough to ward off scurvy, but not adequate enough to prevent chronic disease and promote optimal health.

So how do we get more vitamin C? Taking high doses orally is not effective, as the body limits intestinal absorption of vitamin C. Oral intakes of 1 to 1.5 g result in 50% absorption, and oral intakes over 12 g result in only 16% absorption. High doses of vitamin C administered intravenously, however, bypass the body’s regulation, achieving 100% bioavailability.³

Vitamin C and the Immune System

To prevent and treat disease and infection, the immune system needs to be incredibly healthy, which, according to the Riordan IVC protocol, can be accomplished through high-dose IVC, as it “promotes healthy mitochondria function, stimulates the immune system to produce interferon, to increase NK cell numbers, phagocytosis with enhanced migration and killing function.”⁴

One of the pioneers in IVC therapy, Frederick Robert Klenner, MD, experienced this first hand when he gave poliomyelitis patients tens of thousands of mg of vitamin C per day during the 1948 epidemic. His treatment cured every one of the 60 acute polio cases he saw. All were well in three days and none developed paralysis.⁵

Dr Klenner also used IVC to reverse polio’s devastating effects. In 1951, he treated a five-year-old polio-stricken girl with paralysis of both lower legs of four days’ duration. After 19 days of IVC therapy, she had complete return of sensory and motor function.⁶

In a letter to Dr Klenner in June 1978, American biochemist, chemical engineer and author Irwin Stone wrote, “giving levels of ascorbate for long periods of time at the daily levels you recommend... is equivalent to creating a new human subspecies, “Homo sapiens ascorbicus”... with unusual resistance to disease and stress and with a prolonged life span.”⁷

Vitamin C and Cancer

IVC therapy has been shown to decrease symptoms, improve the quality of life, and prolong survival in can-

cer patients. As of 2009, peer-reviewed research documents that over 700 cancer patients have benefited from IVC or other concurrent antioxidant regimens.⁴

The cancer killing powers of vitamin C were first made known in the 1970s by two-time Nobel Prize winner Linus Pauling, PhD, and Ewan Cameron, MD. Their case report revealed remarkable results achieved with high-dose vitamin C on about 100 terminal cancer patients. The patients treated with vitamin C survived an average of 300 days longer than the control group, with 22% of them living longer than one year.⁸

One aspect of IVC’s cancer-killing mechanism is its function as a pro-oxidant as opposed to an antioxidant (as it is in oral form). According to internationally recognized researcher Mark Levine, MD, when vitamin C is administered intravenously, it diffuses outside of the bloodstream, allowing reactions to generate hydrogen peroxide.⁹ This allows treatment to selectively kill cancer cells while leaving healthy cells unharmed.⁴

Vitamin C also stimulates p53, a tumor suppressor protein, while at the same time suppressing oncogenes, which cause cancer cells to survive and proliferate instead of dying through apoptosis.

Vitamin C therapy also may reduce inflammation, which plays a large role in tumor development and is associated with poor prognosis and decreased survival.¹⁰ According to studies at the Riordan Clinic, high-dose IVC therapy reduced inflammation in cancer patients, correlating with decreases in tumor marker levels.¹⁰

I have seen the effects of IVC on cancer patients first hand. One of my most exciting cases was a woman in her 60s with stage IV ovarian cancer. When she came to my office, she was weak, depressed and chemotherapy resistant, weighing barely 95 pounds with complete hair loss. Her cancer had continued to grow after completing every available traditional therapy, so she was sent home to die. I started her on 75,000 mg of IVC, and today, nearly four years later, she is healthy, thriving and living life to its fullest.

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these contradictory findings have been used in the medical community as an argument against IVC.

Doctors themselves are standing in the way of IVC's potential, as exemplified in the case of a dairy farmer in New Zealand who nearly died from a severe case of swine flu. The man's condition was so grave he became comatose with white out pneumonia. He was kept alive by ECMO, during which he was diagnosed with leukemia. His doctors attempted to take him off life support, insisting that there was no hope, but the family demanded they try IVC. The doctors eventually gave in, and when the man rapidly improved, his doctors refused to give credit to vitamin C. They ceased treatment, causing the man's state to decline once more. The family was forced to take legal action to get him back on IVC. Once they did, he made a full recovery, even from his leukemia.¹⁷

In Summary

This article only scratches the surface of the benefits that high-dose IVC offers, and promising research continues to develop. With only minor side effects and a low cost to patients, it is a safe, natural and obtainable option for boosting the immune system, treating disease and infection, and killing cancer cells, both as a stand-alone treatment and in conjunction with traditional modalities.

The research completed thus far is astounding, although many choose to ignore it in the medical community. Intravenous vitamin C may not bring in big money, but it may save lives. In the words of Dr Klenner, "Some physicians would stand by and see their patient die rather than use ascorbic acid because in their finite minds it exists only as a vitamin." So we face the question: what kind of physicians will we be?

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