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Cancer Center

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FOR THE MEDIA

What is it?

Although lab studies suggest anticancer effects, calcium glucarate has not been shown to treat or prevent cancer in humans.

Calcium glucarate is absorbed in the intestine and converted into a molecule that inhibits beta-glucuronidase, to possibly increase elimination of toxic substances. For example, rats exposed to carcinogens and then fed calcium glucarate had fewer tumors and slower tumor development than rats that were not fed this substance. Calcium glucarate also increases estrogen elimination, which may reduce estrogen levels in the body. This explains its use as supportive care among estrogen-sensitive breast cancer patients. However, positive results in animal studies do not always mean a similar approach will work in humans. In addition, no clinical trials have tested whether calcium glucarate has these effects in humans.

What are the potential uses and benefits?

- To detoxify the body

Lab and animal studies suggest calcium glucarate speeds up elimination of carcinogens from the body. Human studies have not been conducted.

- To prevent and treat cancer

A handful of animal studies show that calcium glucarate can slow tumor development and reduce their number in rats exposed to carcinogens, but human data are lacking. Only one small study in humans suggests that calcium glucarate supplementation might reduce cancer risk for some individuals. More well-designed studies are needed to confirm such effects.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

Calcium Glucarate - Last updated on March 22, 2022

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