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Original Research Article

Effects of vitamin supplementation on inflammatory markers and psychological wellbeing among distressed women: a randomized controlled trial

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Multivitamins are a popular supplement taken to promote physical and mental health. During periods of stress, they may have a protective role for health and wellbeing, although the current evidence of their efficacy is mixed.

OBJECTIVE: To determine whether multivitamin supplementation impacts psychological and inflammatory markers of women who are experiencing psychological distress.

DESIGN, SETTING, PARTICIPANTS AND INTERVENTIONS: An 8-week randomized controlled trial was conducted to assess changes in both psychological state and pro-inflammatory markers of patients receiving multivitamins or placebo. The sample comprised women who reported elevated psychological distress in the previous 4 weeks.

MAIN OUTCOME MEASURES: Psychological state was assessed using Spielberger's State-Trait Personality Inventory to assess anxiety, curiosity, depression and anger. Pro-inflammatory markers comprised interleukin (IL)-1 β , IL-5, IL-6, tumour necrosis factor (TNF)- α and TNF- β .

RESULTS: Improvements across time were observed for all psychological measures and cytokines, except IL-5, but were independent of the active intervention. Only TNF- β demonstrated a significant differential change between groups over the course of the

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