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## Book Reviews

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*Advanced Nutrition Micronutrients*, by Carolyn D Berdanier, 1998, 236 pages, hardcover. CRC Press, Boca Raton, FL.

Berdanier has done an excellent job of presenting succinctly the needs for each micronutrient and explaining how each micronutrient functions in the body. The last 17 pages of the book provide an excellent index.

For each vitamin and mineral micronutrient, the following topics are addressed in an orderly sequence: overview, structure and nomenclature, properties, food sources, absorption and metabolism, functions, effects of deficiency, and recommended dietary allowances. However, the adverse effects of too much of these nutrients are obscured and should be in a separate section entitled "Toxicity," just after the section "Effects of Deficiency."

Berdanier has intelligently tiptoed her way through the minefields of peer-reviewed papers by supplement industry-funded researchers, which cite only publications reporting the upside and ignoring the downside of supplement use. In other words, she gives her readers evidence-based facts and not hyperbole. She points out that some researchers erroneously extol the benefits of ascorbic acid,  $\beta$ -carotene, and vitamin E from fruit, vegetables, nuts, and grains on the basis that their concentrations in the blood increase after consumption. Each fruit and vegetable contains more than 150 health-related phytochemicals, all of which increase in the blood after ingestion, and thus blood concentrations are merely markers of fruit and vegetable intakes and not evidence of cause and effect from any 3 (ascorbic acid,  $\beta$ -carotene, and vitamin E) of these 150 phytochemicals.

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*Nutrients and Foods in AIDS*, edited by Ronald R Watson, 1998, 228 pages, hardcover. CRC Press LLC, Boca Raton, FL.

Although this book mentions foods in the title, it mainly contains information about nutrients and the status of nutrient handling in people with AIDS. This is an edited book of 16 short, well-referenced chapters by 25 contributors that is part of the CRC series in modern nutrition. Nutritional status in relation to trace elements associated with antioxidants and immune status, such as zinc, selenium, copper, magnesium, and manganese, is reviewed with a focus on reports of observational studies. Some supplementation studies are reported, but the data are limited in this area. In one chapter, information on some aspects of the antimicrobial nature of lauric acid and the potential dietary role of fats rich in this fatty acid is presented. One section reviews the literature on gastrointestinal changes and related malabsorption, anorexia, and intestinal infections in AIDS. The antioxidants vitamin C, vitamin E, the B complex vitamins, and  $\beta$ -carotene are reviewed within the context of HIV infection. A small section on pomegranates, cranberry juice, and the role of flavonoids and phenolic compounds in foods of plant origin proposes a beneficial effect of these foods. In summary, the book covers a wide range of topics related to HIV infection and AIDS and provides the reader with an overview of and introduction to some aspects of the interactions between nutrition and nutrients within the physiologic context of disease progression. Mainly, this text would be useful for background information and for stimulating interested investigators to develop research directions.

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