

A nutritional supplement program halts the progression of plaque formation in carotid artery disease

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Introduction Carotid artery disease or carotid artery stenosis is a major risk factor for stroke. Narrowed carotid arteries may block the blood flow to the brain. Common medical treatment includes carotid endarterectomy, or surgical removal of the plaque in the carotid. Previous work suggests that a nutritional supplement program may reduce plaque sizes in arteriosclerosis. This work investigates if that program can also reduce carotid plaques in carotid artery disease.

Methods Twenty four carotid artery disease patients were followed for a period of 12 months. Fourteen patients used Cellular Essentials, a dietary supplement that contains all major vitamins and minerals in adequate levels, a variety of amino acids, and other phytochemicals. Ten patients were used as a control group and did not use any supplementation during the trial period. The patients were evaluated at baseline and after 12 months using carotid ultrasonography. Statistical analysis was performed on the difference in changes of stenosis between the two groups after twelve months using Student's t-tests.

Results The compliance with the supplement program was excellent. The mean difference in calcification area after 12 months in the supplement user group was -18.2% vs. +5.5% in the control group. The difference in changes in calcification area between the two groups was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion This pilot trial supports the theory that plaque formation in carotid artery stenosis can be reduced by taking a nutritional supplement program involving vitamins, minerals, amino acids and phytochemicals. Early intervention with such a program may reverse the need for surgical procedures.