

Antioxidant vitamins or lactulose for the prevention of the recurrence of colorectal adenomas. Colorectal Cancer Study Group of the University of Modena and the Health Care District 16.

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Colonic adenomas represent the natural precursor lesions of most colorectal cancers. The treatment of choice is endoscopic polypectomy. However, after endoscopic removal, polyps recur in a large fraction of cases. Thus, we evaluated the effect of antioxidant vitamins or lactulose on the recurrence rate of adenomatous polyps. After polypectomy, 255 individuals were randomized into three groups. Group 1 was given vitamin A (30,000 IU/day), vitamin C (1 g/day), and vitamin E (70 mg/day); Group 2 was given lactulose (20 g/day); Group 3 received no treatment. Forty-six subjects had to be excluded because the histologic diagnosis was not consistent with adenoma. The remaining 209 individuals were included in the analysis according to the "intention to treat" criterion, though 34 did not adhere to the scheduled treatment or were lost during the follow-up. Subjects were followed at regular intervals for an average of 18 months. Polyps recurring before one year from index colonoscopy were considered missed by the endoscopist. In the 209 evaluable subjects, the percentages of recurrence of adenomas were 5.7 percent, 14.7 percent, and 35.9 percent in the vitamins, lactulose, and untreated groups, respectively. The fraction of subjects remaining free of adenomas, estimated by Kaplan-Meier survival curves, was significantly different among the three groups (log-rank chi-squared = 17.138, $P < 0.001$). Using Cox's regression analysis, treatment was the only variable that significantly contributed to the model (regression coefficient = 0.905, $P < 0.001$). In conclusion, either antioxidant vitamins or, to a lesser extent, lactulose lower the recurrence rate of adenomas of the large bowel and can be proposed as chemopreventive agents, at least in high-risk individuals.

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Gli adenomi cronici rappresentano lesioni che sono precursori naturali per la maggior parte dei tumori al colon e retto. Il trattamento consigliato è la polipectomia endoscopica. Tuttavia, dopo la rimozione endoscopica, in una grande percentuale di casi i polipi ricompaiono.

Le vitamine antiossidanti abbassano la percentuale di ricorrenza degli adenomi intestinali e possono essere proposte come trattamento chemiopreventivo.