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Vitamins Linked to Asthma; Activist Groups Silent

By [Jeff Stier, Esq.](#)

We noted in May that antioxidant vitamins may sometimes be [harmful for the heart](#). In June, we reported that vitamin C use was linked to [arthritis](#). Now, a [study](#) published in the July issue of *Pediatrics*, the journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, tells us that multi-vitamin use within the first six months of life is associated with a higher risk for asthma in black infants. It also found that vitamin use at age three was associated with an increased risk for food allergies.

While the study is preliminary, it raises some interesting questions.

- If this study were about "chemicals" rather than "vitamins," all else being equal, would this story have gotten bigger play?
- Wouldn't the Environmental Working Group [team up](#) with MoveOn.org for hundreds of thousands of dollars of advertising to scare us about it?
- Why is it that we think that just because something is natural it must be safe, yet if something is synthetic, we think it must be dangerous?
- In other words, why does the precautionary principle apply to chemicals, but not to vitamins?
- And doesn't the media have anything better to report than preliminary studies that do not warrant a change in our behavior?

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(the gory details from ACSH)

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