

Scurvy Treatment Guidelines Handout

What is scurvy?

Scurvy is a condition caused by severe vitamin C deficiency, also known as ascorbic acid. Vitamin C is essential for the synthesis of collagen, which is crucial for maintaining healthy skin, blood vessels, bones, and cartilage. Without enough vitamin C, the body cannot produce collagen properly, leading to various symptoms and complications associated with scurvy.

Scurvy symptoms

Common symptoms of scurvy include:

- **Bleeding gums:** Gums may become swollen, inflamed, and prone to bleeding.
 - **Fatigue:** Individuals may feel excessively tired and weak.
 - **Skin changes:** Bruising easily and developing small, red or purple spots on the skin.
 - **Joint pain:** Pain and tenderness in the joints, often worsening with movement.
 - **Delayed wound healing:** Wounds may take longer to heal and can become infected more easily.
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Scurvy treatments

Dietary changes

The primary treatment for scurvy involves increasing vitamin C intake through diet. Include the following vitamin C-rich foods in your daily meals:

- Citrus fruits (oranges, lemons, grapefruits)
- Berries (strawberries, blueberries, raspberries)
- Bell peppers
- Leafy greens (spinach, kale)
- Tomatoes

Vitamin C supplements

If dietary intake is insufficient, vitamin C supplements can be used to restore vitamin C levels quickly. Consult your healthcare provider to determine the appropriate dosage.

Medical treatment

In severe cases or when symptoms persist despite dietary changes and supplements, medical treatment may be necessary. This may involve intravenous (IV) administration of vitamin C under medical supervision to rapidly increase vitamin C levels in the body.

Conclusion

Scurvy is a preventable condition that can be effectively treated with adequate vitamin C intake. By incorporating vitamin C-rich foods into your diet and, if needed, using supplements or medical interventions, you can alleviate symptoms and promote healing. Consult your healthcare provider for personalized advice and treatment options tailored to your specific needs.