

COENZYME Q10

Overview

Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10) is an antioxidant that your body produces naturally. Your cells use CoQ10 for growth and maintenance.

Levels of CoQ10 in your body decrease as you age. CoQ10 levels have also been found to be lower in people with certain conditions, such as heart disease.

CoQ10 is found in meat, fish and whole grains. The amount of CoQ10 found in these dietary sources, however, isn't enough to significantly increase CoQ10 levels in your body.

As a supplement, CoQ10 supplement is available as capsules, tablets and by IV. CoQ10 might help treat certain heart conditions, as well as migraines and Parkinson's disease.

Evidence

Research on CoQ10 use for specific conditions and activities shows:

- **Heart conditions.** CoQ10 has been shown to improve symptoms of congestive heart failure. Although findings are mixed, CoQ10 might help reduce blood pressure. Some research also suggests that when combined with other nutrients, CoQ10 might aid recovery in people who've had bypass and heart valve surgeries.
- **Parkinson's disease.** Early research suggests that high doses of CoQ10 might be beneficial for people in the early stages of this progressive disorder of the nervous system that affects movement.
- **Statin-induced myopathy.** Some research suggests that CoQ10 might help ease muscle weakness sometimes associated with taking statins.
- **Migraines.** Some research suggests that CoQ10 might decrease the frequency of these headaches.
- **Physical performance.** Because CoQ10 is involved in energy production, it's believed that this supplement might improve your physical performance. Research in this area has produced mixed results, however.

Our take

Generally safe

CoQ10 supplements might be beneficial for treating conditions such as congestive heart failure and Parkinson's disease. CoQ10 is considered safe, with few side effects. However, be sure to take this supplement under your doctor's supervision.

Safety and side effects

CoQ10 supplements appear to be safe and to produce few side effects when taken as directed.

Mild side effects might include:

- Upper abdominal pain
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea
- Diarrhea
- Headaches
- Insomnia
- Rashes
- Fatigue
- Dizziness
- Light sensitivity
- Irritability

The safety of use of CoQ10 during pregnancy and breast-feeding hasn't been established. Don't use CoQ10 if you're pregnant or breast-feeding.

Interactions

Possible interactions include:

- **Anticoagulants.** CoQ10 might make blood-thinning drugs, such as warfarin (Coumadin, Jantoven), less effective. This could increase the risk of a blood clot.

References

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