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A PREVENTATIVE APPROACH TO HEART AND BONE HEALTH INCLUDES VITAMIN K2



By Dr. Dennis Goodman, MD, FACC, FACP, FCCP
Board-Certified Cardiologist, Integrative Medicine, author of,
“Vitamin K2: The Missing Nutrient for Heart and Bone Health”

“Wellness” and “Optimal Health” are not simply the absence of disease. They are, in fact, the total sum of mind, body and spirit. As a board-certified cardiologist and director of integrative medicine at NYU Langone Medical Center, everyday in my own practice, I discuss four keys to good health with every patient: Exercise, stress management, sleep and nutrition (including supplements).

So why should you make Vitamin K2 a part of your supplement program?

Because caring for our cardiovascular health and our bone health are two of the most pressing health issues facing Americans, women in particular, and Vitamin K2 helps to support both of these important areas of well being.

Very simply put, Vitamin K2 is the body’s light switch. It activates or “turns on” important proteins in the body, such as osteocalcin for strong bones and the matrix Gla protein (MGP) for heart health. By “turning on” these K-dependent proteins, Vitamin K2 helps keep calcium, that crucial bone-building nutrient, away from your arteries so they

don’t harden and lead to cardiovascular disease.

Of the 800,000 people who die each year from heart disease, 150,000 are under the age of 65. Young women pursuing careers and raising families may often put off medical care, not realizing that they are at risk for heart attack or stroke. Medical experts recommend women be mindful of preventative measures throughout all stages of their lives to avoid premature heart disease and cardiovascular events. Vitamin K2 is an essential component in that pursuit. Unfortunately, studies have shown that 97 percent of Western populations are deficient in this vital

nutrient, even those consuming healthy diets. Therefore, supplementation presents a viable alternative to ensure we have enough Vitamin K2 to experience both cardiovascular and bone benefits.

A multitude of studies have been conducted proving Vitamin K2’s effectiveness in three categories: cardiovascular health, bone health and children’s health. I will focus on the cardiovascular and bone benefits in adults. More research is being done every day to support its benefits in these crucial areas.

One exciting study published last year in the journal *Thrombosis and Haemostasis*, using a specific Vitamin

K2 called MenaQ7[®] confirmed the impressive cardiovascular support this nutrient offers. This randomized, double blind, placebo-controlled clinical trial of healthy postmenopausal women showed that taking 180 mcg daily for three years, not only inhibited age-related stiffening of the artery walls, but also made a statistically significant improvement of vascular elasticity. In other words, a nutritional dose of Vitamin K2 actually made the arteries *more flexible*. As a cardiologist, I believe this breakthrough trial adds further evidence to prove the benefit of Vitamin K2, an especially important benefit to women’s heart health.

Another study that caught my attention was also conducted on healthy postmenopausal women over a three-year period. This randomized, double blind, placebo-controlled clinical trial again used 180 mcg of MenaQ7[®] Vitamin K2, and showed the first clinically statistically significant protection of the vertebrae and the hip (femoral neck) against bone loss. After three years of supplementation, maintenance in both bone mineral content and bone mineral density were statistically significant in the MenaQ7[®] group. Moreover, bone strength was statistically improved, demonstrating therapeutic benefits for the MenaQ7[®] group as compared to the placebo group. This study was published in *Osteoporosis International* in May 2013.

Studies like these are why I wrote my new book, “*Vitamin K2: The Missing Nutrient for Heart and Bone Health*.” I wanted to educate the public, health professionals and of course, my patients, to the benefits of this important nutrient,

as well as the scientific evidence to support it. I believe there are several supplements that are scientifically proven to be of benefit and Vitamin K2 as MenaQ7[®] is among them.

Women’s Awareness

According to a study published Nov. 23 in *JAMA Internal Medicine*, young women who’ve had a heart attack will have a 20-times increased risk of a second heart attack and a tripled risk of a first stroke. Two more recent studies published in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* confirm that women under the age of 55 are often unaware of the risk factors of heart disease and are less likely to receive life-saving procedures to open clogged heart arteries compared to their

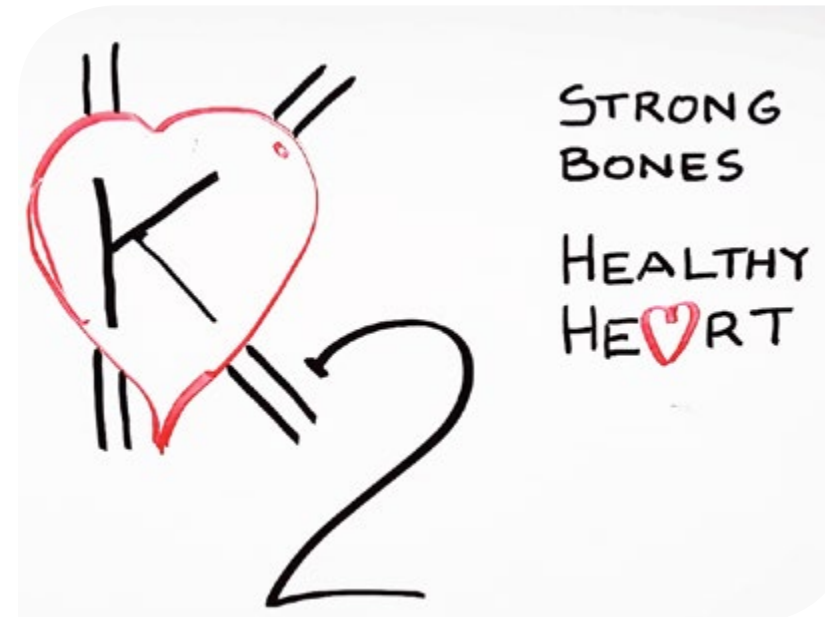
produce calcium on their own, and it is required for many functions in the body, including building strong bones. The answer is to take calcium *with* Vitamin K2, as it plays a critical role in regulating calcium metabolism. By keeping the calcium in your bones and out of your arteries where calcium buildup can lead to artery clogging, Vitamin K2 is an essential nutrient for promoting bone and cardiovascular health simultaneously.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for women in the United States, killing nearly 422,000 each year, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. I believe those numbers could be reduced dramatically if women embrace a preventative approach to their health. That means exercise,

stress management, sleep and nutrition, including appropriate supplementation. And that supplementation should include Vitamin K2 as MenaQ7[®], the form used in the clinical studies.

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in the Department of Cardiology and Preventative Medicine. His area of special interest is prevention, early detection and treatment of cardiovascular disease with an integrative approach for optimal patient health care. A sought-after speaker, Dr. Goodman has been a visiting teaching professor throughout South Africa, Asia, and Europe, and has published many articles in addition to three books on heart health, including “*Vitamin K2: The Missing Nutrient for Heart and Bone Health*.”



male counterparts.

One of my biggest concerns about heart disease prevention for women is that health care providers are not making the connection between a woman’s bone and heart health. Calcium supplementation plays an important role for building bones, but can cause problems for the heart if Vitamin K2 is missing from the calcium supplement.

What many doctors will tell women to do is to just stop taking the calcium, but that’s not the answer. Our bodies cannot