Dietary-vitamin recommendation according to diseases

Ana María Sánchez Peralta, María Dolores Murillo, Ana Molinero Crespo.

Background In the community pharmacy, we can recognize different patients with different diseases and ailments. But in Spain, healthy people may also visit a pharmacy for counselling. To optimally serve the client, our counselling must be developed based on the patient characteristics and diseases.

Purpose To create a nutritional/dietary recommendation service for community pharmacies, based on nutritional/vitamin recommendations.

Method Based on a review about vitamins for human use, a list will be created indicating which vitamins can be useful in certain diseases. The list/table will then be edited, so that it is easy for use in the pharmacy. A training will then be developed for community pharmacists, based on these recommendations.

Findings After review of the literature, it became clear that different groups of vitamins are necessary for different ailments, tissues or structures. Thus it is helpful to recommend certain foods to people with specific diseases, such as group B vitamins in relation to the nervous system or to the cardiovascular system. Antioxidants such as Vitamin A (not in smokers), C and E, are recommended for the prevention of cancer in general, and specific vitamins for prevention of certain cancers. But vitamin A, for instance, does not prevent lung cancer in smokers, but increases the risk. Vitamins should not be recommended if the cancer already established. On the other hand, almost all vitamins can be advice to people who maintain a slimming diet who will have a lack of the minimum amounts of all of them so it is always advisable a multivitamin if there are no contraindications.

Conclusion A quick review shows that different vitamin groups are needed in case of certain diseases or diets, and recommendations about the specific foods or supplements needed for individual patients can be developed. Such aids can assist the pharmacy staff when counselling pharmacy visitors on their vitamin needs.