

Ask Leyla: Are supplements available to help lower my homocysteine?



Q: My homocysteine is 10.2 and I am on Coumadin because of a past pulmonary embolism and blood clot. I am a 56-year-old woman and in pretty good health. Is there any supplement you'd recommend to lower my homocysteine?



A: High homocysteine is an independent risk factor for cardiovascular disease, stroke, dementia and bone fracture. Luckily for most people, it can be lowered pretty easily with nutrition.

Homocysteine needs to be converted back to methionine and this requires plenty of B vitamins, particularly B6, B12 and folate along with betaine and trimethylglycine. The availability of B

vitamins, among other micronutrients, ensures proper methylation. Those with the MTHFR polymorphism need additional help with the methylated versions of B12 and folate: methylcobalamin and methylfolate. The supplement of choice to lower homocysteine is Methyl-Guard Plus.

You should also be aware that while taking Coumadin, it is important to keep your vitamin K-containing vegetables consistent from day to day. You should not be avoiding vegetables altogether. Here are food sources high in vitamin K. It is best to limit these to one serving a day, about a half cup cooked:

- Spinach
- Brussels sprouts
- Kale
- Swiss chard
- Turnip greens
- Collard greens

The following foods are moderately high in vitamin K, so you can have up to three servings a day:

- Seaweed, dulse
- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Soybeans
- Chickpeas
- Lentils
- Scallions

To your health!