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- Geowissenschaften
- Gesellschaftswissenschaften
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- Maschinenbau
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- Medizintechnik
- Medizin Gesundheit**
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- Wirtschaft Finanzen

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Home → Fachgebiete → Medizin Gesundheit → Nachricht

Taking a supplement of glycine, a food additive, helps to prevent degenerative diseases such as arthrosis or osteoporosis

06.08.2007

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**Glycine is a non-essential amino acid used by the organism to synthesise proteins and is present in foods such as fish, meat or dairy products.**

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The study, carried out at the Cellular Metabolism Institute in Tenerife and at the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology of the University of Granada by Doctor Patricia de Paz Lugo and supervised by Doctors Enrique Meléndez Hevia, David Meléndez Morales and José Antonio Lupiáñez Cara, established that the direct intake of this substance as a food additive helps to prevent arthrosis and other degenerative diseases, in addition to other diseases related to a weakness in the mechanical structure of the organism, including the difficulty of repairing physical injuries.

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The work of De Paz Lugo was developed at the Cellular Metabolism Institute (CMI) in Tenerife, where researchers studied the effect of the glycine supplement on the diet of a group of 600 volunteers affected by different diseases related to the mechanical structure of the organism such as arthrosis, physical injuries or osteoporosis. The patients analysed were aged 4-85, and the average age was 45.

In all cases, there was a notable improvement in the symptomology. "Thefore –according to De Paz Lugo– we concluded that many degenerative diseases such as arthrosis can be treated as deficiency diseases due to the lack of glycine, since supplementing a diet with

this amino acid leads to a notable improvement in symptomology without the need to take painkillers".

A very common disease

Arthrosis is the most common osteoarticular problem in our society: more than 50% of the population suffer from it after the age of 65, and 80% of people over 75. It consists of a degeneration of the articular cartilage which disappears until it leaves the subchondral bone exposed. Arthrosis has no cure at present and the most widely used treatments are pain-killers and NSAID (non-steroidal antiinflammatory drugs), which only relieve pain but do not repair the damage in the cartilage or influence the development of the disease.

The work carried out by the scientist from the CMI shows that collagen has a unique structure with a right-handed triple superhelix in which the glycine represents a third of its residues. Mathematical analysis of the metabolic route of the synthesis of the glycine, developed by the research group to which Patricia de Paz belongs, demonstrated that this amino acid should be considered an essential amino acid.

The doctoral thesis carried out at the CMI and the UGR [http://www.ugr.es] has shown that the capacity of the metabolism to synthesise glycine is very limited. The conclusion of this study is that glycine, administered in daily doses of 10 grams divided into two doses of 5 grams ?one in the morning and one at night? leads to a general improvement in these problems over a

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