

[IMAGE]

## Which Antioxidant Can Help Women With Gestational Diabetes?

By Editorial Staff

Expectant moms are all too familiar with *gestational diabetes*, either because they've been warned about it or experienced it personally. Gestational diabetes is essentially diabetes that develops during pregnancy. High blood sugar levels are the hallmark feature and are said to be caused by placental hormones, which lead to glucose build-up in the bloodstream. Sometimes, diet and exercise are the solution; other times, insulin shots and/or medications are required.

A naturally occurring antioxidant called ALA (alpha-lipoic acid) may also help, suggests new research. Women with gestational diabetes were divided into two comparison groups, with one group taking 100 mg of ALA daily and the other group taking an inactive placebo. After eight weeks, fasting blood sugar and other diabetes indicators had declined significantly in the ALA group compared to the placebo group. Study findings appear in the *International Journal of Reproductive Biomedicine*.

With an estimated 10 percent of women experiencing gestational diabetes during pregnancy, the condition is no laughing matter. Fortunately, as this study suggests, the solution may be a simple, *natural* one. Alpha-lipoic acid is found in low amounts in spinach, broccoli, yams, potatoes, yeast, tomatoes, Brussels sprouts and other foods; but it's also available as a nutritional supplement, allowing for more robust amounts of this important antioxidant to do its job – in this case, to help ensure women enjoy a healthy pregnancy.

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