

Under the Microscope With Prof Kevin Croft

A study into the effect Vitamin E has on blood pressure has received a \$128,446 research grant from the Heart Foundation.

RPH School of Medicine and Pharmacology Research Fellow Prof Kevin Croft has received the funding to look into how vitamin E affects drug metabolism in humans.

Prof Croft said this study came about after findings from a previous study into the effect of high doses of vitamin E on people with diabetes.

“People with type 2 diabetes were given a high dose of vitamin E and we were surprised to see an increase in their blood pressure,” Prof Croft said.

“Many trials have been done with vitamin E but so far no one has looked into the effect this vitamin has on drug metabolism.”

This study will involve giving different doses of vitamin E to volunteers to determine if there are effects on drug metabolising enzymes.

Some of these enzymes are involved in metabolism of blood pressure medication.

“There is evidence in animal models that vitamin E might influence or stimulate the enzymes that metabolise certain blood pressure medications,” he said.

Study participants take a daily dose of vitamin E for three to six weeks and then they are assessed to see if there has been any change in the metabolism of a marker drug.

“The results of this study will have a significant impact on recommendations about the safety and effectiveness of this common daily supplement.”

“Many people consume vitamin E supplements so if we can find out the effect it has then hopefully we can form recommendations for the safe use of vitamin E particularly for those people with cardiovascular disease.”

This two year clinical trial has already started and cell culture studies will also be undertaken during this period.

Prof Croft said grants like these from the Heart Foundation allow him to focus on the prevention of heart disease.

“This is a collaborative grant which also involves Post Doctorate Fellow Dr Jason Wu, PhD student Michael Clarke and Anaesthesia Consultant Dr Thomas Ledowski.”