

Abstract

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The association of folate, zinc and antioxidant intake with sperm aneuploidy in healthy non-smoking men.

Young SS, Eskenazi B, Marchetti FM, Block G, Wyrobek AJ.

School of Public Health, University of California, 2150 Shattuck Avenue, Suite 600, Berkeley, CA 94704-7380, USA.

BACKGROUND: Little is known about the effect of paternal nutrition on aneuploidy in sperm. We investigated the association of normal dietary and supplement intake of folate, zinc and antioxidants (vitamin C, vitamin E and beta-carotene) with the frequency of aneuploidy in human sperm.

METHODS: Sperm samples from 89 healthy, non-smoking men from a non-clinical setting were analysed for aneuploidy using fluorescent in situ hybridization with probes for chromosomes X, Y and 21. Daily total intake (diet and supplements) for zinc, folate, vitamin C, vitamin E and beta-carotene was derived from a food frequency questionnaire. Potential confounders were obtained from a self-administered questionnaire.

RESULTS: After adjusting for covariates, men with high folate intake (>75th percentile) had lower frequencies of sperm with disomies X, 21, sex nullisomy, and a lower aggregate measure of sperm aneuploidy ($P \leq 0.04$) compared with men with lower intake. In adjusted continuous analyses, total folate intake was inversely associated with aggregate sperm aneuploidy (-3.6% change/100 microg folate; 95% CI: -6.3, -0.8) and results were similar for disomies X, 21 and sex nullisomy. No consistent associations were found between antioxidant or zinc intakes and sperm aneuploidy.

CONCLUSIONS: Men with high folate intake had lower overall frequencies of several types of aneuploid sperm.

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