

Arginine Before Surgery Helps Patients

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Researchers have found that there are many beneficial effects for the use of a nutritional supplement in patients who undergo cardiac surgery and who are at high risk of infection.

Researchers from the University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands studied 50 elderly patients who were scheduled to undergo elective cardiac surgery and who were at high risk of infection. Half of the patients received a nutritional supplement while the other half did not. The nutritional supplement contained arginine. Patients who received the supplement took it for a minimum of five days before the surgery.

Researchers then evaluated the patients' outcomes after surgery. It was discovered that patients who took the immune-enhancing nutritional supplement arginine fared better after surgery. These patients had better cellular immune response, a lower infection rate, improved circulation, and better kidney function than those who did not receive the supplement. Researchers say the supplement was well tolerated and there were no reported side effects.

According to *The Lancet* 2001 (358:696-701), it is recommended that the supplement be taken five to 10 days before the surgery.