

[Travell J, Rinzler SH, Bakst H, Benjamin ZH, Bobb AL \(1949\)](#). Comparison of effects of alpha-tocopherol and matching placebo on chest pain in patients with heart disease. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 52:345-53.

### Key passages

## COMPARISON OF EFFECTS OF ALPHA-TOCOPHEROL AND A MATCHING PLACEBO ON CHEST PAIN IN PATIENTS WITH HEART DISEASE\*

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### *Methods*

During a preliminary period, 41 patients with long-standing chest pain and with either arteriosclerotic or hypertensive heart disease, or both, were selected from the case-load of the cardiac clinic. About 75 per cent of these patients had effort angina. The remainder had intermittent pain unlike effort angina (not induced by walking and not relieved promptly by rest or nitrites) and constant chest pain. We regard the first type as primarily cardiac and the last two as having a large somatic component.

After the necessary base-line observations had been made, the patients were paired to match as closely as possible with respect to pertinent factors. In order to "randomize" the parallel series, one of each pair was allotted by chance to the vitamin-treated, and one to the placebo-control group. TABLE 1 shows that the matching of patients was satisfactory and that the two groups were indeed closely comparable with respect to their initial status.

Blind-test methods were then applied both in the collection and interpretation of data. One person (S. H. R.) issued the medication and never examined the patients. Thus, none of the examiners knew which patients were receiving the vitamin and which ones, the placebo. Even judgments regarding the final result were made in each case without knowledge of the nature of the material administered.