

Records

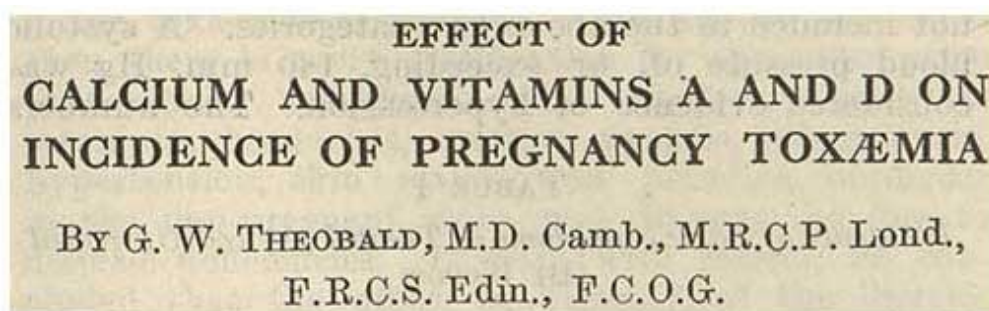
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[Theobald GW \(1937\)](#). Effect of calcium and vitamin A and D on incidence of pregnancy toxæmia. *Lancet* 2:1397-1399.

Key passages



THE following experiment, carried out at St. Mary Abbots Hospital,* London, during 1936, was devised to determine whether the mere addition of calcium and vitamins A and D to the dietaries of patients attending the antenatal clinic would have any effect on the incidence of toxæmic symptoms.

Apparently healthy women, not more than twenty-four weeks' pregnant, were divided by the sister into two groups when they first attended at the clinic, no attention being paid to their previous obstetric histories. They were divided at random in the following manner:—

An equal number of blue and white beads were placed in a box. Each woman accepted for the experiment was asked to draw a bead from the box. Those who drew blue beads were placed in Group A while those who drew white beads were placed in Group B. The beads drawn out were placed in a separate container.

The patients in Group A were requested to take daily, for the remainder of their pregnancies, calcium lactate 20 grains, vitamin A (11,000 international units) and naturally occurring vitamin D (450 units); while those in Group B served as controls. The oil containing the vitamins was supplied in capsules, of which four were to be taken every day, while the calcium lactate was distributed in the form of tablets. No advice concerning diet was given to either group of patients.

Each group contained 50 women. In Group A 25, and in Group B 26, were primigravidæ. The symptoms were recorded by independent antenatal officers who had no knowledge as to which patients were receiving the additional substances. All patients developing albuminuria, showing hypertension, or suffering from excessive vomiting, or œdema were admitted into the antenatal ward. Those suffering from insomnia or severe headaches were also advised to go into hospital.