

# **JIM C – HEALTH TERMS**

## **MONDAY - 11/9/2009**

### **HOW DID THE TERM “VITAMIN” ORIGINATE?**

***Definition:*** Various fat-soluble or water-soluble organic substances essential in minute amounts for normal growth and activity of the body, and obtained naturally from plant and animal foods.

***Origin (Online Etymology):*** 1920, originally *vitamine* (1912) coined by Polish biochemist Casimir Funk (1884-1967), from Latin *vita* "life"+ *amine*, because they were thought to contain amino acids.

- 1747 - Scottish naval surgeon James Lind discovered that a nutrient (now vitamin C) in citrus foods prevented scurvy
- 1905 – Englishman William Fletcher determined that if special factors (vitamins) were removed from food, disease occurred
- 1906 - Frederick Hopkins postulated that some foods contained "accessory factors", in addition to proteins, carbohydrates, fats
- 1935 - Vitamin C, the first vitamin to be artificially synthesized

***Wikipedia:*** The reason the set of vitamins seems to skip directly from E to K is that the vitamins corresponding to "letters" F-J were either reclassified over time, discarded as false leads, or renamed because of their relationship to "vitamin B".

**Conventional Wisdom:** Vitamin = Essential organic components

**Moment of Zen:** Natural foods are better than supplements