

New Light on the Sunshine Vitamin!

Most people reading this will be surprised about the association of vitamin D and reduced rates of cancer, resistance to tuberculosis, flu, and others. The thought is that vitamin D is for osteoporosis. A condition known as rickets and bone degeneration are both recognized for being caused by vitamin D deficiency. The fame of cod liver oil rests primarily on its ability to prevent these conditions. The early link between vitamin D and bone health has remained the primary one for this vitamin. One strange thing about vitamin D is that it is not a vitamin in the ordinary sense.

The normal definition of a vitamin is that they are nutrients we must consume because we cannot make them in the body. However, humans readily make vitamin D with the aid of sunlight. Upon being exposed to a particular wavelength of ultraviolet light, vitamin D is made in the skin, being both a strength and a weakness. The ability to produce vitamin D can free us from a complete dependence upon a food source, but it also means that humans can very easily become vitamin D deficient. Vitamin D deficiency impairs immune function, increases susceptibility to flu, and is linked to some cancers.

Vitamin D generally refers to the fat-soluble vitamin that is only found in a few foods. Fish liver oils are the richest sources of this vitamin, with fortified milk products and other fortified foods being the primary sources in the American diet. Actually, it is a public health policy in the U.S. to fortify milk with 400 IU of vitamin D per quart. Since digestive disturbances can interfere with acquiring vitamin D, those who suffer from liver dysfunction, Chron's Disease, and the elderly in general can easily find themselves at risk of developing vitamin D deficiency. Poor uptake from foods is extremely unfortunate for those who also get inadequate expose to sunlight. Vitamin D is the principal regulator of calcium in the body, as it controls skeletal development and bone mineralization.

Vitamin D's most famous role involves bone health, as osteoporosis results from an imbalance between bone restoration and bone formation and decreased vitamin D levels lead to reduced absorption of calcium. Even though its bone health benefits are likely greater than those of calcium supplementation, vitamin D is not a cure-all solution for bone issues. Supplementation is primarily useful in conditions of insufficiency. However, there are recent findings that vitamin D may be more effective when used in conjunction with calcium and vitamin K in order to provide enhanced bone health.

There are other conditions that are related to the body's vitamin D status. Vitamin D deficiency can cause the excessive turnover of bone minerals in adults, leading to bone mineral loss, soft bones, and bone pain. Psoriasis is often improved by exposure to summer sunshine. When the season is not beneficial, ointments based on vitamin D analogs are used to control excessive turnover of skin cells, which is found in psoriasis.

Poor mood is often associated with age and recent data suggests that low levels of vitamin D are associated with poor mood. Seasonal Affective Disorder has been shown to be effectively treated by vitamin D. Calcium and D3 have been proven to have a small effect on the prevention of weight gain. Additionally, there is mounting evidence that vitamin D can play a role in diabetes as well. Have you had your Vitamin D today? Vitamin D supplements are readily available at your local health food store.

About the Author

More information on vitamins like [vitamin D](#) is available at VitaNet ®, LLC Health Food Store. <http://vitanetonline.com/>

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