

The Wellness Express



Jump on the train to good health

Issue 4, April 2010

Vitamin D Goes Far Beyond Bone Health

Presented by: Fox Valley Chiropractic

Your chiropractor can tell you that vitamin D plays a vital role in producing healthy bones. Science has known for decades that a deficiency in this vitamin is linked with rickets, a disease that causes poor bone formation.

For centuries we primarily obtained vitamin D from exposure to the sun's ultraviolet light. We easily achieved this for thousands of years as humans predominantly worked outside. But now, especially in industrialized countries, we spend most of our working days indoors.

Health researchers are surprised at just how widespread low vitamin D levels are throughout our society. Studies have shown that vitamin D deficiency in some North American social groups is as high as 80%. It seems to be a bigger problem for people with dark skin, which is not as efficient in producing vitamin D from sun exposure.

Where you live also impacts your vitamin D levels. If you live in the Northern United States or Canada, you're more likely to be deficient as the longer, darker winters in these areas restrict sunlight hours.

Another factor that makes getting sufficient amounts of this vitamin complicated is it's difficult to obtain through our diet. Natural sources of vitamin D are few, largely found in a handful of fish species and fortified milk products.

Surprising Research

In the last five years there has been a steady stream of news on vitamin D and its wide-ranging effects on preventing diseases and improving chronic health problems.

According to a review of vitamin D research published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*, test subjects who consumed vitamin D supplements had an overall lower risk of death from any cause!¹ The amounts of vitamin D in the reviewed studies ranged from 300 IU (international units) to 2,000 IU daily with the average intake equaling 528 IU.

Other research has produced compelling evidence of vitamin D's impact on cancer.

University of California researchers discovered that consuming 1,000 IU of vitamin D daily slashes the risk of colon, breast and ovarian cancer up to 50%.²

Exercise of the Week

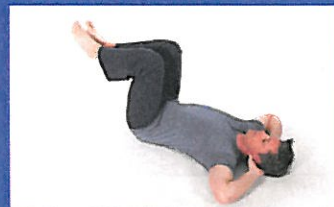
Alternating Oblique Crunches

Difficulty: Moderate

(Consult your chiropractor before starting this or any other exercise.)

Start: Lie on back with knees and hips bent to 90 degrees and feet elevated. Both hands should be behind head/neck with elbows out to sides.

Exercise: Keeping hands behind neck, curl forward so shoulders are just off floor. Then, bring right elbow across body to touch left knee. As left knee is brought up toward chest, straighten right leg. Pause, then bring left elbow across body to touch right knee, straightening left leg. Alternate sides for 10-15 repetitions per side.



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In a study that appeared in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, research revealed men taking 1,500 IU of vitamin D every day had a 17% reduction in all cancer occurrences. And it also showed an amazing 45% reduction in deaths caused by digestive cancers.³

There's also good news for women. *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* published a report that found post-menopausal women who obtained 1,100 IU of vitamin D daily saw a dramatic reduction in all types of cancers.⁴

Other investigations show vitamin D's positive impact on rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis and type 1 diabetes.

More research needs to be done to determine how vitamin D provides such comprehensive improvement in so many areas of health. Some scientists speculate the vitamin can prevent cancer cells from multiplying, boost the immune system and expand blood vessels.

Improved Weight Loss?

This versatile vitamin may also provide additional support for weight loss. In a study funded by the National Institutes of Health and the University of Minnesota, participants involved in a calorie-restricting diet plan saw a greater reduction in abdominal fat as well as losing more weight in general when they increased their levels of vitamin D.

Muscle Pain and Vitamin D

A deficiency in vitamin D may also play a role in muscle pain. Patients who were suffering non-specific muscular pain were also found to have unusually low levels of vitamin D, according to a study published in the journal *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*. Other research exposed how common the deficiency is in children - an age group that had previously been considered at low risk for this problem.⁵

And a study published in the journal *Spine* showed that 83% percent of low back pain sufferers also had insufficient levels of vitamin D. When their vitamin D intake was boosted, nearly all of the patients showed improvement in pain symptoms.⁶

With all this impressive evidence, you should ensure you're getting enough of this important vitamin. The quantity of vitamin D you need depends on various factors, such as your race, age and geographic location. That's why you should first discuss supplementation with your chiropractor to get the amount right for you.



Quote of the Week

"The longer I live the less confidence I have in drugs and the greater is my confidence in the regulation and administration of diet and regimen."

- John Redman Coxe

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This newsletter is written and designed by Mediadoc™ exclusively for its chiropractic clients.

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