

Vitamin D: The Wonder Vitamin



Imagine a treatment that could build bones, strengthen the immune system, and lower the risk for illnesses like diabetes, heart and kidney disease, high blood pressure, depression, and cancer. Seems unrealistic, doesn't it?

Research suggests that such a wonder treatment already exists in the form of vitamin D. Vitamin D is a nutrient that our bodies create from sunlight. It can also be found in fish, cheese, some cereals, and fortified milk.



The Sun is
the best
source of
vitamin D.

Despite the many potential health benefits of vitamin D, as many as half of all adults and children are thought to have less than optimum levels. More alarming is that as many as ten percent of children are highly deficient, according to a 2008 report in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

The amount of vitamin D a person has can be influenced by various lifestyle choices, and also the location in which they live. Those of us who live in the Northeast are unable to get vitamin D from the sun for six to seven months out of the year! If you take into account all the rainy and dreary days during the spring and summer, our ability to get vitamin D from the sun is reduced even further.

Another less obvious factor is that we are told by health professionals to quickly apply sunscreen anytime we are going to be outside, in an effort to prevent skin cancer. While this strategy works well to block harmful rays from the sun, it also prevents the absorption of vitamin D into our bodies.

Getting enough vitamin D from food alone would require a diet rich in fish and milk. You'd need to drink 8-9 glasses of milk every day to get the amount of vitamin D necessary to prevent deficiency, which would lead to a new set of problems because of all the calories you would gain from the milk!



In the absence of sunlight, supplements are the next best source of vitamin D.

The bottom line is that supplementation is virtually the only way to get an adequate intake of vitamin D. Vitamin D helps your body to prevent and treat severe chronic diseases. It also helps fight off the common cold that so many Americans suffer from throughout the year, especially during the winter. However, not all supplements are created equal. A high-quality supplement is as important as vitamin D itself. Taking a "run of the mill" supplement may not be effective due to binders and fillers, which cause a decrease in absorption and bioavailability.

Vitamin D is an important part of our bodies natural chemistry, yet its not something that people worry about. Moving to the Caribbean, or somewhere equally as sunny, would go a long way towards making sure you get enough Vitamin D, but that isn't realistic for most of us. A more plausible

solution is to find a good vitamin D supplement, and make it a part of your daily routine.

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