

Vitamin D, or Vitamin D Hormone?

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Vitamin D deficiency is common in the United States and worldwide. It is known to be important in bone mineral metabolism but now we have information that does much more.

Vitamins are generally known to be responsible for a single disease and appropriate supplementation should correct the disease. A hormone goes to distant tissues and makes multiple metabolic improvements. That's vitamin D's job.

Your levels of vitamin D should be much higher than previously thought. Certainly much higher than noted on the milk carton or vitamin pills in the local drug store. Here is the story today.

Eight hundred to a thousand IU is needed in general but as we age we need much more. I like liquid formulations best because as you age, D is more difficult to absorb. It is probably best to consume that thousand IU daily for consistency in improving all the things Vitamin D will do for you.

For example, hip fracture drops 23% and other non vertebral fractures drop 26%. We know about retarding bone loss as we age but did you know that it works on the muscles as well? Lower extremity strength and improved walking were shown in several studies in older people. The risk of falling is improved 22%. It's nice to have less muscle pain, walk a little faster and get out of a chair quicker than the other seniors. Arthritis is decreased in severity as well.

Many cancers are also significantly diminished in occurrence by increasing vitamin D. These include cancers of the colon, breast, and prostate. Other metabolic disorders include type 1 Diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, possibly type 2 Diabetes and multiple sclerosis.

Vitamin D is a potent modulator of activated T and B-lymphocytes, the workhorse of the immune system. Animal models show prevention of rheumatoid arthritis, and Crohn's Disease of the bowel. Research has shown marked improvement in psoriasis as well.

If that isn't enough, it is generally noted that there is a distinct improvement in well being and energy, often in the first week. All these improvements were reported in *Endocrine News*, a publication of the Endocrine Society in the August/September issue 2005 beginning on pg 10.

It's remarkable what you can do for yourself when you couple reliable information about health into action for your life. It's not just good, it's thrilling. It's the way life is supposed to be.