Vitamin D Levels Inadequate During Winter Months

A study in the *Journal of Nutrition* by researchers from the University of California, Davis is one of the most recent to recommend a vast increase in the recommended dosage for proper vitamin D levels.* Vitamin D deficiency has been associated with or can make worse a host of diseases, including osteopenia, osteoporosis, muscle weakness, fractures, common cancers, autoimmune diseases, infectious diseases, and cardiovascular diseases.

In order to prevent the onset of these diseases, vitamin D sufficiency is defined in this study as having blood vitamin D levels of at least 75 nmol/L (30 ng/mL).* In order for people of European ancestry with high sun exposure to achieve that level, they would need to supplement with 1,300 IU per day of the vitamin during the winter. People of African ancestry with low sun exposure would need to supplement with between 2,100 and 3,100 IU per day throughout the year, according to the study.

The study, led by Laura Hill, endorses increasing the supplementation of vitamin D for some groups of people by nearly five times the current 200 IU recommendation.

**Editor’s note:** While mainstream doctors are finally realizing the lethal dangers of *insufficient* vitamin D, they still don’t understand that *optimal* levels of 25-hydroxyvitamin D in the blood are *over 50 ng/mL*. Achieving this optimal blood level usually requires the daily ingestion of 5,000 IU to 10,000 IU of vitamin D3.

—Jon Finkel

Reference


More Drug Company Kickbacks

Federal prosecutors claim that Big Pharma company Johnson & Johnson paid tens of millions of dollars in kickbacks so nursing homes would prescribe their schizophrenia medicine to more patients.* An Associated Press article written by Linda A. Johnson described the recent alleged lawsuit, where prosecutors Johnson & Johnson paid rebates and other forms of kickbacks to Omnicare Inc., the country’s biggest dispenser of prescription drugs in nursing homes.

The allegations are in a complaint filed by the US Attorney in Boston that includes accusations that after receiving money from Johnson & Johnson, pharmacists at Omnicare then recommended that nursing home patients with signs of Alzheimer’s disease be put on the strong schizophrenia drug Risperdal®. This drug was later found to increase the risk of death in the elderly.

“Kickbacks in the nursing home pharmacy context are particularly nefarious because they can result in excessive prescribing of strong drugs to patients who have little or no control over the medical care they are receiving,” US Attorney Carmen Ortiz said in his statement. “Nursing home doctors should be able to rely on the integrity of the recommendations they receive from pharmacists, and those recommendations should not be a product of money that a drug company is paying to the pharmacy.”

—Jon Finkel

Reference


Pterostilbene Aids in Colon Cancer Prevention
In a recent study in the journal *Carcinogenesis* by the Department of Chemical Biology at the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy, Rutgers University, stilbenes, which are phytochemicals present in grapes and berries, were shown to potentially help prevent colon cancer.*

While widely studied stilbenoids like resveratrol have shown antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, chemopreventive, and anti-aging effects in a number of biological systems, the purpose of this study was to identify the chemopreventive potential of pterostilbene with colonic tumor formation as an end point, and to further evaluate how pterostilbene affect colon carcinogenesis.

The researchers evaluated rats over a 45-week period that were given either a control or 40 ppm pterostilbene. Overall analysis indicated that pterostilbene reduced colon tumor multiplicity of non-invasive adenocarcinomas, lowered proliferating cell nuclear antigen, and downregulated the expression of beta-catenin and cyclin D1.

—Jon Finkel

Reference


**Antioxidant-rich Fruits and Vegetables May Cut Lymphoma Risk**

In a recent study done at the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine in Rochester, Minnesota, researchers evaluated the results of increased dietary intakes of specific antioxidant nutrients, like vitamin C, alpha-carotene, and proanthocyanidins in order to determine their effectiveness in reducing the risk of cancer.*

The study, led by James Cerhan, analyzed the dietary intakes for 35,159 Iowa women aged between 55 and 69. A total of 415 cases of non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma were documented during the study.

Dietary vitamin C intakes were associated with a 22% reduction in lymphoma risk, while alpha-carotene, proanthocyanidins, and manganese were associated with 29, 30, and 38% reductions in risk. In addition, increased intakes of fruits and vegetables were associated with a 31% reduction in risk, while yellow/orange and cruciferous vegetables were linked to a 28 and 18% reduction.

—Jon Finkel

Reference


**Blueberry Juice May Boost Memory**

A new study done by researchers at the University of Cincinnati Academic Health Center showed that drinking wild blueberry juice every day improved the memory of aging adults with memory problems.*

Blueberries contain polyphenol compounds, the most prominent of which are anthocyanins. Anthocyanins have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects and have also been associated with increased neuronal signaling in brain centers, which mediates memory function as well as improved glucose disposal. These benefits would be expected to mitigate neurodegeneration.

The researchers measured the effects of daily consumption of wild blueberry juice in a sample of nine older adults over a 12-week period. The findings of this preliminary study suggest that moderate-term blueberry supplementation may confer neurocognitive benefits and establish a basis for more comprehensive human trials to study preventive potential and neuronal mechanisms.

Editor’s note: Blueberry extracts are available in a number of dietary supplements.