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Vitamin D: Builds Bones And Much More

ScienceDaily (July 15, 2008) — Vitamin D is essential to strong bones. Inadequate vitamin D can lead to osteoporosis, a brittle bone disease.

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Recently, researchers have found that vitamin D may help reduce the risk of other diseases.

Fall prevention: With age, decreasing muscle strength can increase the risk of falls and bone fractures. Several studies have found that vitamin D supplements may benefit muscle strength and balance, helping older adults stay steadier on their feet.

Cancer prevention: Observational research indicates that low levels of vitamin D increase the risk of some cancers — including those of the breast, colon, rectum, ovary, kidney, lung and uterus. Although unclear why, vitamin D in adequate amounts appears to help regulate cellular growth, potentially preventing cells

from becoming cancerous.

Chronic pain prevention: Vitamin D deficiency is increasingly recognized as an important cause of muscle pain and weakness.

Protection against autoimmune diseases: Evidence is mounting that vitamin D may offer protection from type 1 diabetes, multiple sclerosis and rheumatoid arthritis by reducing inflammation and strengthening the immune system. In one study, researchers found a 40 percent lower risk of multiple sclerosis in women who supplemented their diet each day with at least 400 international units (IU) of vitamin D.

Reduced risk of cardiovascular disease: Some research indicates that lower vitamin D levels are associated with a number of factors that affect cardiovascular health, including coronary artery calcification and, possibly, congestive heart failure.

So, how much vitamin D is enough?

Recommendations from medical groups vary, but a daily intake in the range of 800 to 1,000 IU is likely to benefit most adults. The body produces vitamin D when exposed to ultraviolet rays, but many people need a supplement to reach recommended levels. Many multivitamins contain vitamin D. This nutrient also can be purchased alone or combined with calcium.

The July issue of Mayo Clinic Women's HealthSource reports further information and guidelines on how much vitamin D is enough.

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Adapted from materials provided by [Mayo Clinic](#), via [Newswise](#).

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Suicidality and Antidepressant Drugs

Antidepressants increased the risk compared to placebo of suicidal thinking and behavior (suicidality) in children, teens, and young adults. Depression and certain other psychiatric disorders are themselves associated with increases in the risk of suicide. Patients of all ages who are started on antidepressant therapy should be monitored appropriately and observed closely for clinical worsening, suicidality, or unusual changes in behavior. PRISTIQ is not approved for

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