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CLINICAL REPORT

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CLINICAL REPORT

Prevention of Rickets and Vitamin D Deficiency in Infants, Children, and Adolescents

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▶ ABSTRACT

Rickets in infants attributable to inadequate vitamin D intake and decreased exposure to sunlight continues to be reported in the United States. There are also concerns for vitamin D deficiency in older children and adolescents. Because there are limited natural dietary sources of vitamin D and adequate sunshine exposure for the cutaneous synthesis of vitamin D is not easily determined for a given individual and may increase the risk of skin cancer, the recommendations to ensure adequate vitamin D status have been revised to include all infants, including those who are exclusively breastfed and older children and adolescents. It is now recommended that all infants and children, including adolescents, have a minimum daily intake of 400 IU of vitamin D beginning soon after birth. The current recommendation replaces the previous recommendation of a minimum daily intake of 200 IU/day of vitamin D supplementation beginning in the first 2 months after birth and continuing through adolescence. These revised guidelines for vitamin D intake for healthy infants, children, and adolescents are based on evidence from new clinical trials and the historical precedence of safely giving 400 IU of vitamin D per day in the pediatric and adolescent population. New evidence supports a potential role for vitamin D in maintaining innate immunity and preventing diseases such as diabetes and cancer. The new data may eventually refine what constitutes vitamin D sufficiency or deficiency.

Key Words: vitamin D • vitamin D deficiency • rickets • vitamin D requirements • infants • children • adolescents • 25-hydroxyvitamin D • vitamin D supplements

Abbreviations: AAP—American Academy of Pediatrics • 25-OH-D—25-hydroxyvitamin D • 1,25-OH₂-D—1,25-dihydroxyvitamin D • PTH—parathyroid hormone

▶ INTRODUCTION

This statement is intended to replace a 2003 clinical report from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP),¹ which recommended a daily intake of 200 IU/day of vitamin D for all infants (beginning in the first 2 months after birth), children, and adolescents. The new recommended daily intake of vitamin D is 400 IU/day for all infants, children, and adolescents beginning in the first few days of life.

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