

Dangers of Vitamin D Deficiency

(By Sandy Robinson; Reprinted from "The Seagull", Triad Post Polio Support Group Newsletter)

I wrote an article online about the dangers of Vitamin D Deficiency and thought it would be fitting for this site. Never try to diagnose yourself. Always see a physician with any questions on Vitamin D Deficiency or any other health issues.

I never realized until I was diagnosed with a serious Vitamin D Deficiency what all problems this could cause. My doctor was very concerned because my levels were dangerously low and he immediately put me on a high dose Vitamin D supplement. Some other health problems my doctor told me Vitamin D Deficiency could cause include heart disease, chronic pain, Fibromyalgia, hypertension, arthritis, depression, inflammatory bowel disease, obesity, PMS, Crohns Disease, cancer, MS and other autoimmune diseases.

The Vitamin D Council states that Vitamin D Deficiency can also cause stroke, osteoporosis, muscle weakness, muscle wasting and birth defects.

The American Society of Anesthesiologists released a report in October of 2007 that stated approximately one in four patients who have chronic pain issues were also found to have low levels of Vitamin D. This was according to a new study that the American Society of Anesthesiologist conducted. Their study also found that those with lower levels of Vitamin D required higher doses of morphine over a longer period of time.

According to the Vitamin D Council, if you are someone who completely avoids the sun, you will need to take approximately 4,000 units of Vitamin D per day. You would have to drink 40 glasses of milk a day or take 10 multivitamins a day to get the required amount of Vitamin D. Naturally neither one of these methods is recommended so what are we to do? Many people now fear the sun due to the increasing awareness and prevalence of the deadly skin cancer, Melanoma. The Vitamin D Council says that most people typically make about 20,000 units of Vitamin D after 20 minutes of sun exposure, which is about 100 times more that the daily amount of Vitamin D the FDA says we need. Tanning beds are another option to get the required amounts of Vitamin D also. Personally I will not use a tanning bed or spend excessive amounts of time out in the sun due to fear of skin cancer.

There is another option if you are not a sun worshiper. You can have your physician administer a 25-hydroxyvitamin test to determine if you have optimal levels of Vitamin D in your blood. The Vitamin D Council considers optimum levels to be approximately 50 nM/L. The 25-hydroxyvitamin test measures the amount of calcidiol (prehormone found in the blood that is produced in the liver). This is considered the most reliable

form of testing for Vitamin D Deficiency. If this test shows that you are indeed Vitamin D deficient, there is also a supplemental vitamin D3 Cholecalciferol you can take.

In order to get the proper amount of Vitamin D your body requires, you need to be able to find a healthy balance of sunlight, but still reduce your risk of skin cancer, particularly Melanoma. Wear sunscreen every time you are in the sun and keep your sun exposure to 20 minutes at a time.

(Editor's Note; I began therapy for Vitamin d Deficiency in January and find that I am experiencing far less pain.)