

[IMAGE]

Should You Worry About Your Vitamin D?

By Jaclyn Chasse, ND

Vitamin D has earned its way into the spotlight, and rightfully so. Research has confirmed the importance of vitamin D to our health, and it's likely that we are just beginning to understand the diverse ways this nutrient, actually a hormone, supports our body. We do know that it plays a vital role in the proper synthesis of bone, supporting our skeleton along with calcium, magnesium, and vitamin K, and keeping it strong and healthy. Vitamin D has also been identified as a key nutrient to support optimal immune system functioning.

Vitamin D has earned enough credibility that many health care providers are routinely screening patients for a deficiency. Vitamin D deficiency is considered when serum (blood) levels of 25-OH-Vitamin D fall below about 30 ng/mL (nanograms of vitamin D per milliliter of serum). If you are found to be deficient, it is recommended to supplement vitamin D to get you back into a normal range. Sounds simple, right? Well, of course, taking the right form and dose of vitamin D is where things get complicated.

vitamin d - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark Prescription forms of vitamin D do exist, but they are in the form of vitamin D2, a form that requires conversion by the body into the active D3 form. Vitamin D is available in the D3 form, and that is the preferred form you should look for in your dietary supplements. Standard dosing of vitamin D is 400 IU (international units) daily. Many practitioners dose much higher than this, but daily doses over 1,000 IU should be taken only under the supervision of an experienced provider, as vitamin D is a fat soluble nutrient and has the potential to reach toxic levels.

Third party testing of vitamin D by Consumer Labs has also disclosed that several vitamin D products on the market have issues with potency that do not match what is on the label. This means that the dose you think you are getting (and is posted on the label) may not be what you are actually taking. This can be harmful whether you are getting under-dosed or over-dosed! Ask your healthcare practitioner what brand they would recommend and stick with that trusted product to ensure a safe and effective dose of vitamin D.

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