

[IMAGE]

Less Vitamin D, More Back Pain

By Editorial Staff

We've heard a lot about vitamin D lately for its immune-boosting benefits, but it also plays a role in back pain, specifically if you don't get *enough* of it, and particularly if you're a postmenopausal woman.

Smoking, osteoporosis and high body-mass index are some of the other variables that can contribute to low back pain, but what about vitamin D status? In a study group of postmenopausal woman (average age 65.6 years), nearly 13 percent had severe vitamin D deficiency. Those 13 percent also were more likely to suffer low back pain. Writing on their findings in the journal *Menopause*, the researchers stated that they also found an inverse relationship between lower vitamin D status and more severe disc degeneration: the lower the vitamin D level, the more severe the degeneration.

If you're a postmenopausal woman, how many of the above risk factors for low back pain do you have? Make sure vitamin D deficiency isn't one of them by getting tested to determine your status and then taking D supplements as directed by your doctor. Note that vitamin D deficiency is particularly prevalent during the winter months, when sunlit hours wane and people tend to spend more time indoors. (Sunlight is the most powerful source of vitamin D, producing it from cholesterol when the sun strikes the skin.)

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