

[IMAGE]

## **D Stands for Diabetes Defense**

By Editorial Staff

If you're looking for a single vitamin to help you "take on the world," it just might be vitamin D. That's because vitamin D has been associated in numerous research trials with a long list of potential health benefits. We're talking immune-system support, bone health, blood pressure regulation, and wide-scale disease prevention, including everything from rheumatoid arthritis to multiple sclerosis, to various cancers (prostate, colon, etc.).

And then there's diabetes, specifically type 2 diabetes, which affects nearly 10 percent of U.S. adults – and those are just the diagnosed cases. Yes, vitamin D can also protect against diabetes, and a new study adds to the favorable evidence.

Because type 2 diabetes manifests in the body's inability to effectively use insulin (which is produced in the pancreas), the pancreas is continually producing it to meet the body's demand to reduce blood glucose levels. Eventually, it is unable to do so and blood sugar levels stay perpetually high: diabetes. Researchers in the new study suggest maintaining vitamin D receptor levels in pancreatic cells could help counteract pancreatic cell damage caused by type 2 diabetes.

They came to this conclusion after finding that mice with both type 1 and type 2 diabetes had lower expression of vitamin D receptors in the pancreas; while at the same time, overexpression of vitamin D receptors appeared to counteract the disease. In other words, more vitamin D receptors = lower risk of diabetes; fewer vitamin D receptors = higher risk of diabetes. Talk to your doctor about the multiple health benefits of vitamin D and discuss whether supplementation (and in what amounts) would be wise for you. (If you're not getting consistent exposure to sunlight or eating a ton of food high in vitamin D, it's worth testing to find out if you're deficient or near-deficient, as millions of Americans are.)

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