

COMMENT ON: VITAMIN D DEFICIENCY

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Dear Sir,

Gani and How⁽¹⁾ presented an informative overview of vitamin D deficiency and valuable information on treatment and nutritional requirements. The article clearly supports the use of vitamin D supplementation to enhance skeletal health. However, it does not mention studies on the role of vitamin D and its metabolites in the prevention and treatment of other diseases (e.g. cancer, hypertension, and cardiovascular, infectious and autoimmune diseases).⁽²⁾

Although the efficacy of supplemental vitamin D for nonskeletal diseases is controversial,^(3,4) there appears to be a growing body of evidence indicating that in many disease states, this vitamin influences prevention and occurrence by acting as a cofactor.⁽²⁾ Thus, it may have additional benefits that go beyond skeletal issues, especially since many individuals with vitamin D deficiency also suffer from autoimmune conditions and disease states related to the cardiovascular system. These other concerns may provide an additional incentive for practitioners to evaluate vitamin D levels in their patients.

As the authors indicated, the most effective source of vitamin D appears to be sunlight, particularly at ultraviolet B photon energies between 290 nm and 315 nm. Ageing also has an impact on the efficiency of previtamin D₃ production and is an important factor in cases of deficiency, as noted by the authors. Natural food sources of vitamin D have been shown to vary greatly (i.e. wild vs. farm-raised salmon); although this is not commonly recognised in the literature, it may be of great importance when examining food sources and supplementation.⁽⁵⁾

Yours sincerely,

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