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Life Extension Update Exclusive

Inadequate vitamin D levels prevalent among “healthy” children

The July, 2007 issue of the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* reported the conclusion of researchers at The Children’s Hospital and the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine in Philadelphia that many otherwise healthy children and adolescents have inadequate levels of vitamin D. Vitamin D deficiency in youth can lead to rickets, muscle weakness, and defective bone mineralization. Reduced levels of the vitamin have been linked with poor immune function, hypertension, cancer, multiple sclerosis, type 1 diabetes, and obesity.

Babette Zemel, PhD and her associates measured the serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D levels of 382 healthy children between the ages of 6 and 21 living in the northeastern United States. Interviews were conducted to determine dietary and supplemental vitamin D intake. Fat and lean mass were measured using dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry.

The team found that 55 percent of the children had inadequate serum vitamin D levels of less than 30 nanograms per milliliter. Sixty-eight percent experienced low wintertime levels. African Americans, children aged 9 and older, and those whose vitamin D intake was low were likeliest to have reduced serum vitamin D levels. Fat and lean body mass were not found to have independent associations with vitamin D status.

“The best indicator of a person’s vitamin D status is the blood level of a vitamin D compound called 25-hydroxyvitamin D,” Dr Zemel noted. “Vitamin D deficiency remains an under-recognized problem overall, and is not well studied in children.”

Health Concern

Osteoporosis

It is common knowledge that calcium and vitamin D work together to help prevent osteoporosis. But what about the many other essential minerals and nutrients needed for bone health? And which kind of calcium is really the best? Many people are surprised to learn it is probably not the kind they are taking on a regular basis.

The human skeleton is the single largest organ system in the body. Composed of a complex mix of organic proteins and inorganic mineral crystals, bones are much more than just structural supports. They are the body’s only reservoir of minerals such as calcium and phosphorus, which are critical for virtually every other organ system. The bones are also highly sensitive to hormonal changes. During puberty, when hormone levels surge in both boys and girls, bones are stimulated to grow rapidly as teenagers become full-sized adults. Thus, it is not really surprising that in later years, as hormone levels decline, the bones become vulnerable.

Maintaining healthy bones goes far beyond calcium and vitamin D, although these are vital. A healthy bone matrix also relies on vitamins and minerals that are rarely mentioned in the context of osteoporosis, including zinc, boron, copper, magnesium, vitamin K, silicon, folic acid, and others. This information is vital to the 10 million people, including 2 million men, who are known to suffer from osteoporosis in the United States.

http://www.lef.org/protocols/metabolic_health/osteoporosis_01.htm

Featured Products

25-Hydroxyvitamin D test

This test is used to rule out vitamin D deficiency as cause of bone disease. It can also be used to identify hypercalcemia.

<http://www.lef.org/newshop/items/itemLC081950.html>



Vitamin D Capsules

Vitamin D is necessary for utilization of calcium and phosphorus and in many ways acts as a hormone. The two most important forms of vitamin D are cholecalciferol (D3), which is derived from our own cholesterol and ergocalciferol (D2), a plant analogue derived from the diet. The cholecalciferol supplied by the Life Extension Buyers Club is synthetic, but its form is identical to that which is derived from cholesterol and synthesized by sunlight on the skin. Cholecalciferol Vitamin D is essential for bone growth and maintenance of bone density.

<http://www.lef.org/newshop/items/item00251.html>



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<http://www.levacations.com>

If you have questions or comments concerning this issue or past issues of *Life Extension Update*, send them to ddye@lifeextension.com or call 954 202 7716.

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