

Vitamin D Can Reduce Cancer Mortality in the Over 50s

In a previous Health Tip I made reference to the benefits of Vitamin D in supporting the body's immune system in reducing the effects of COVID-19 on our bodies. Now, a recent study of hundreds of research papers has documented the benefits of Vitamin D in reducing cancer mortality.

Most observational studies have reported that Vitamin D has a beneficial effect on risk of colon, breast, prostate, and ovarian cancer. One particular search yielded epidemiological studies on Vitamin D from sunlight, with 63 studies, including 30 on colon cancer, 13 on breast cancer, 26 on prostate cancer, and 7 on ovarian cancer.

Of the 30 studies on [colon cancer](#) or adenomatous polyps, 20 found a statistically significant benefit of Vitamin D, its serum metabolites and sunlight exposure on cancer risk or mortality. Another study in which the association was limited to men, reported a beneficial effect of Vitamin D on the risk of colon or rectal cancer.

Of the 13 studies on [breast cancer](#), 9 reported a favorable association of Vitamin D from sunlight with cancer risk, including one where the association was limited to premenopausal women.

Thirteen of the 26 studies of [prostate cancer](#) found a statistically significant favorable association and five of the 7 studies of [ovarian cancer](#) found higher mortality associated with lower Vitamin D intake.

The majority of studies found a protective relationship between sufficient Vitamin D status and lower cancer deaths. The evidence suggests that efforts to improve Vitamin D status, for example by Vitamin D supplementation, could reduce cancer mortality at low cost, with few or no adverse effects.

Despite impressive results regarding cancer mortality, Vitamin D did not appear to have any effect on cancer incidence, however it may affect the invasiveness and aggressiveness of the cancer.

Vitamin D status has emerged as a significant public health issue in Australia and New Zealand. An [estimated 31% of adults in Australia have inadequate vitamin D](#), increasing to more than 50% in women during winter– spring and in people residing in southern states.

Vitamin D is one of the most inexpensive vitamins. Daily supplementation in the Australian population would be an overall cost saving by reducing cancer mortality.

The take-home message. For the over 50s, regardless of the amount of time spent in the sun, supplementing with one tablet of Vitamin D 1,000 IU tablet a day will keep deficiency at bay.

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