



No.30 – Who Needs Vitamin D

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Title: **Who Needs Vitamin D Supplements**

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Background

There has been some interest in lack of Vitamin D as a possible trigger for autoimmune disease. Although there is no evidence that Vitamin D deficiency is a cause of ITP, Dr Johnson's article will help you to ensure your Vitamin D levels are not low by following this general advice.

Function of Vitamin D

Vitamin D has several important functions. For example, it helps regulate the amount of calcium and phosphate in the body. These substances are needed to keep bones and teeth healthy. If you do not get enough vitamin D, you might be more at risk of some of the harmful effects of too much vitamin A and a lack of vitamin D can also lead to rickets and osteomalacia.

Taking 25 micrograms (0,025mg) a day of vitamin D supplements is the MAXIMUM recommended by the Department of Health.

PLEASE CHECK WITH YOUR LOCAL PHARMACIST FOR THE APPROPRIATE VITAMIN SUPPLEMENT FOR YOU.

Good sources of vitamin D

Most of our vitamin D comes from sunlight on our skin. The vitamin forms under the skin in reaction to sunlight. The best source is summer sunlight. However, if you are out in the sun, take care not to stay long enough to turn red or get burnt.

Vitamin D is also found in a small number of foods. Good food sources are: oily fish such as sardines, eggs, fortified fat spreads, fortified breakfast cereals, powdered milk.

Recommendations

The Department of Health recommends that the following people take daily vitamin D supplements:

- all children aged six months to five years old
- all pregnant and breastfeeding women
- all people aged 65 and over
- people who are not exposed to much sun, such as people who cover up their skin for cultural reasons or those who are housebound or confined indoors for long periods.
- People with darker skins such as people of African-Caribbean and South Asian origin.

How much vitamin D do I need

You do not need vitamin D in your diet every day. This is because any of the vitamin your body does not need immediately is stored for future use. Most people should be able to get all the vitamin D they need by eating a healthy balanced diet and by getting some sun.