

Higher Does Vitamin D3 Important for Breast and Colon Health

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Individuals who have the highest levels of vitamin D3 have a significantly reduced risk of breast and colon cancer, a new study has found.

Researchers at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) gathered data from observational studies that found that there was a reduced incidence of breast and colon cancers in individuals with higher levels of vitamin D3. They then took these past results one step farther by determining how much vitamin D would have to be consumed to achieve protection against these cancers.

The researchers determined that, in North America, in order to achieve a 50 percent reduction in colon cancer incidence, individuals would likely have to receive 2,000 IU per day of vitamin D. In order to halve the risk of breast cancer, women would have to receive 3,500 IU per day. The median adult intake of vitamin D in the US is 230 IU per day.

With universal attainment of a serum vitamin D3 level of greater than or equal to 55 ng/ml, the researchers projected that in North America alone at least 60,000 cases of colorectal cancer could be avoided per year and another 85,000 cases of breast cancer if vitamin D3 intake were increased.

In adults, vitamin D3 deficiency, may lead to osteopenia, osteoporosis, muscle weakness, fractures, common cancers, autoimmune diseases, infectious diseases and cardiovascular diseases.

The researchers called for increased vitamin D intake among the general population and recommended that vitamin D2, which is less bioactive, be replaced in favor of vitamin D3, which is more bioavailable and is the same type produced in the body from sunlight.

Reference:

Garland, Cedric F. et al. What is the dose-response relationship between vitamin D and cancer risk? *Nutrition Reviews*. 2007;65;8 (Supl):91-95.