

SHOULD YOU TAKE A VITAMIN D SUPPLEMENT?

StoneTree Naturopathic Clinic, Collingwood, ON

The days are getting shorter, summer tans are fading, and the little sunshine vitamin is back in the media and on our minds.

Traditionally we've thought of vitamin D as helping us avoid rickets, but the last decade has delivered countless observational studies linking low vitamin D to ailments like heart disease, multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis, juvenile diabetes, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's and even cancer.

It makes sense that this vitamin is important. After all, you've evolved so that you can get a huge influx of it just by going outside, and there are receptors for vitamin D on every cell in your body.

Unfortunately, there are few natural food sources of Vitamin D, and they pale in comparison to what we get from sun exposure. And in this age, even that is dramatically limited by sunscreen, decreased outdoor activity, and 60-hour workweeks under fluorescent lights.

Measuring Vitamin D

Should you take a supplement? The answer is *probably*. Most of us aren't getting much from the sun, and although there have been no long-term studies on the benefit of oral vitamin D, toxicity is very uncommon – you likely aren't overstocked.

How much should you take? The best way to decide is to use a simple blood test to measure your level of 25-hydroxy Vitamin D after fall begins. That will give you an idea of how much you stored away during the sunny days of summer. Normal is anything >70 ug/dl, although there is lots of debate around what is optimal.

To learn more, book a complimentary 15-minute visit with a naturopathic doctor in our Collingwood, ON clinic by calling 705-444-5331, or emailing us at feelbetter@stonetreeclinic.com
www.StoneTreeClinic.com