

# Health Matters

## Natural Paths to Healthier Living

The Georgetown Naturopathic Wellness Centre

Fall 2007

### The Many Roles of Vitamin D

It is hard to ignore vitamin D in the news these days. Early reports announced its critical role in the prevention and treatment of osteoporosis. More recently research studies are touting vitamin D as cancer preventing! Along with all of this excitement are warnings not to take "too much" because of toxicity potential. So, what is the average person to do? Read on and we'll help you decide if vitamin D is right for you and your family, and how much you should take.

Vitamin D, along with vitamin A, E and K belong to the family of fat soluble vitamins. Fat soluble vitamins are different from water soluble vitamins like vitamin C, because of the way the body absorbs and stores them. Water soluble vitamins taken in excess are easily discarded through the urine, but fat soluble vitamins are stored in the body for long periods of time. Your body normally creates its own vitamin D in response to sun exposure. However, concerns about skin cancer and limited sunlight in northern hemispheres during the winter make Canadians particularly susceptible to vitamin D deficiencies.

**"The vitamin D story is what I call a 'no-lose' proposition. Take it. You can only win,"** - Dr. Reinhold Vieth, Researcher, Mount Sinai Hospital

Current research now indicates that it is safe for the average adult to take as much as 5000 IU per day of vitamin D3. But your need for vitamin D depends on a number of factors.

Generally speaking we recommend 1000 IU/day for adults and 400 IU/day for children over the age of 12. Children under the age of 12 are best given vitamin D in the form of cod liver oil.

### Feature Product

#### **"Bio-D-Mulsion 1000"**

*A new liquid vitamin D supplement that is easy to take and highly absorbable.*



#### **Vitamin D and Cancer Prevention**

Recent studies exploring the role of vitamin D in the prevention of osteoporosis uncovered an astonishing fact. Investigators at Creighton University found that when postmenopausal women take vitamin D in combination with calcium, their cancer incidence *decreased* by about 60%. As a result of this research and other similar findings, the Canadian Cancer society is recommending that all adult Canadians take vitamin D in the fall and winter. Those with higher risk of a vitamin D deficiency such as people with dark skin or people who don't spend much time outside, take 1000 IU all year round.

#### **Vitamin D and bone density**

The major biologic role of vitamin D is to send a message to the intestines to increase its absorption of calcium and phosphorus. It also works in conjunction with other vitamins and minerals to promote bone mineralization. A deficiency in childhood of vitamin D leads to rickets. A long term chronic deficiency of vitamin D in adulthood leads to osteoporosis.

For the prevention of osteoporosis, vitamin D should be taken in conjunction with a calcium supplement (all good calcium supplements include vitamin D) at a minimum of 400 IU/day. For the treatment of osteoporosis, vitamin D should be taken at 1200 – 2000 IU/day with a high quality calcium supplement.

### **\*Health Canada Advisory\***

Health Canada has followed the lead of the FDA this month warning parents not to give cough and cold medications to children under the age of two. *Cough and cold remedies for children under the age of two and antihistamines for children under the age of six should NOT be used unless specifically advised by your doctor.* Johnson and Johnson has recalled many of these products including infant cough and cold drops by Tylenol, Dimetapp, Triaminic and Robitussin.

## **The HEALTHY Lunch Box**

Back to school means back to lunches for many of our families. Ensuring that kids have a healthy lunch is vital to their school performance. After years of listening to what kids actually eat for lunch at school, Dr. Nicole Meier came up with the Healthy Lunch Box series. For those you who are new patients, or for those of you who missed this lecture series, here is the short and sweet version.

### ***The Importance of Nutrient Balance***

We have found that most brown bag lunches are very carbohydrate heavy. Simple carbohydrates like white bread, muffins, cookies and juice cause an immediate spike in blood sugar. If you don't know the consequences of this, just ask a teacher how kids behave after Halloween! After the blood sugar spike, comes the crash. This is where

we have sleepy, inattentive children in the afternoon.

The majority of Canadian children do not even eat half of the recommended servings of fruits and veggies. It is impossible for these serving recommendations to be met at the evening meal only. So, lunch is a perfect time to get these food groups.

Processed foods, fast food, pop and packaged lunches (ie: Lunchables) have no place in a healthy lunch box. If you were listening to the news last week, you heard the report in the Lancet of increased incidence of hyperactivity in children who consumed food dyes and additives. Boy, what a surprise! ☺

### ***Components of a Healthy Lunch***

- One protein source
- One complex carbohydrate
- One fruit
- One vegetable
- WATER

Protein sources include meat (preferably not cured meat like ham), eggs, fish, cheese or yogurt, and soy. Complex carbohydrates include brown rice, whole wheat bread, homemade whole wheat muffins, or whole grain pitas. Fruit can be whole or presented differently like in an unsweetened apple sauce. Vegetables can be raw or cooked in a soup or sauce.

### **NEW OFFICE HOURS**

Due to popular demand, we are now open to the public on Tuesdays.

Monday	9am-4pm
Tuesday	9am-4pm
Wednesday	9am-4pm
Thursday	9am-8pm
Friday	9am-4pm

We close daily for lunch from 12pm – 1pm

Yours in good health,

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