

Winter is the time for Vitamin D Deficiency or Sunbathe Naked with your Mushrooms!

OK...Hands Up!! How many of you have been told by your GP that you are low in Vitamin D and you need to take Vitamin D supplements? You buy some supplements marked "Vitamin D", take them according to the instructions on the bottle and after taking them, find out you are still deficient. What happened?

If you have been experiencing more back pain, muscle twitching, hair loss, arthritis aches, joint pain, depression, trouble sleeping or a weakened immune system, you might have a nutritional deficiency. Vitamin D helps maintain strong and healthy bones by retaining calcium. Some studies show it can help fight some cancers, heart disease, osteoporosis and build a stronger immune system.

Do you get plenty of sunlight but make sure you slather on sunscreen before exposure which stops the absorption of vitamin D?

There are three main ways to boost your Vitamin D.

- 1) **Exposure to sunlight** is the best way to get the cholesterol in your skin to convert melanin into usable Vitamin D to be distributed throughout the body. For fair skinned people, 10 minutes a day of exposure between 10-3:00 without sunscreen on your arms and legs is all it takes. For olive skinned people, about 30 minutes and darker skinned people need up to an hour a day.
- 2) **Step up your intake of Vitamin D rich foods.** Eat more cottage cheese, eggs and cold-water fish like salmon, tuna or sardines. Put your mushrooms in the sun to absorb Vitamin D! They are one of the only plant sources that act similarly to how human skin does, absorbing more Vitamin D when exposed to the sun. Portobella or Maitake are highest in Vitamin D.
- 3) **Take supplements.** Best one would be Vitamin D3, not D2. D3 is the type of Vitamin D our bodies naturally make called cholecalciferol. Most fortified cereals use a type of D2 called ergocalciferol that is not as absorbable nor convertible by the body into what it needs. Also, Vitamins A, C and E help protect Vitamin D.

One final note about vitamin D – A review published in *The Journal of the American Osteopathic Association* found Vitamin D can't be metabolized without sufficient magnesium and can cause vascular calcification and is dangerous for people with kidney problems. To give you peace of mind, it might be best to see a Nutritional Therapist for professional advice if you have any deficiencies in need of adjusting before you try buying something off of the shelf.

Best to just strip down and get some sun with your mushrooms! Maybe pegging a load of laundry everyday in the buff would do the trick, too!

To Your Health,

Pen Klohs, Nutritional Therapist