



Vitamin D: Deficiencies?...Disease?...Danger?

As most of you know, at least the eight of you that have read my last two rants on cholesterol; I'm not a big believer in Statin drugs nor am I fully convinced that Cholesterol is the boogey man it has been out to be. Like most things in health maybe an understanding of balance and how we have evolved is necessary for an understanding of how we can achieve optimal health.

Are you really concerned about your cholesterol levels, how about scrapping the Statins and hanging out on the beach in Maui to strengthen your bones and lower your LDLs?

We all know that the sun is the beginning of existence on earth, life would cease without the sun. The sun can also be a problem too much and we experience drought. On an individual level the sun plays no less of an important role. Too much sun and we may increase our chances for certain types of skin cancer, and speed the ageing of our skin. Too little sunlight and we weaken our bones, increase our risk of neurological disorders, depression, disease, and compromise our immune system. So it seems the sun is a lot like relationships can't live with them can't live with out them.

It all starts with vitamin D. Vitamin D is crucial for human development and health. This vitamin helps us avoid rickets as children, and osteoporosis as adults. Vitamin D deficiencies have been shown to play a part in a wide variety of diseases including cancer, diabetes, heart disease, psoriasis, arthritis and mental illness. The importance of Vitamin D is nothing new and in America milk was fortified with vitamin D virtually wiping out rickets in the United States. But guess what Vitamin D isn't only found in your morning drink, when conditions are correct we produce our own vitamin D. Strictly speaking a vitamin has to be obtained from an outside source and is needed for survival, Vitamin C is an example. Vitamin D is like a hormone in the sense that we produce it, and what do humans use to make this vital nutrient? If you've been paying attention you guessed it cholesterol. That's right that evil horrible substance that is flowing through your body is once again shown to be necessary for survival.

And how does your body manufacture vitamin D from cholesterol? Once again you know the answer the SUN. That's right sun exposure is the process by which our body manufactures Vitamin D.

Not only is it the sunlight it's the UVB or ultraviolet B waves that are required to convert cholesterol to Vitamin D. Those UVB waves are the strongest when the sun is over head, the exact time we have been told to avoid. Lucky for us our bodies are effective at storing vitamin D.

Recent research from Australia has that the use of sun block reduces vitamin D. The Aussies began a war on skin cancer called "Slip-Slop-Slap" leave it to those blokes to come up with a clever campaign. What they found was as sun exposure went down Vitamin D deficiencies went up.

Another aspect of this conversion is Folic Acid, as sunlight converts cholesterol to Vitamin D it uses and destroys folic acid or folate. Folic acid has to be replaced and is very important for health, as all pregnant women have been told by their OBGYN. Women with low levels of folate are at higher risks of delivering children with serious birth defects including spinal bifida. For this reason all neonatal formulas have added folic acid, and hardly a doctor today doesn't recommend their pregnant patients to supplement during pregnancy. If you're pregnant, and enjoy indoor tanning or sitting in the sun regularly be sure to add folic acid to your daily diet and help ensure a healthy child.

Everything in life is about balance. The sun is life giving and life promoting; mankind has known this for tens of thousands of years, the reason why there are "Sun Gods" in every culture. Primitive man recognized the life giving properties of the sun. But too much of any one thing can cause disease. Completely eliminating exposure to the sun can also cause disease it is all about moderation.

If you have recently been told you have "high cholesterol" and the recommendation is to begin a lifetime of highly toxic, disease promoting, quality of life destroying Statin drugs you may have another option, have you considered..... Maui?

References

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