

Media Release

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CMA welcomes vitamin D guidance

Complementary Medicines Australia (CMA) has welcomed new UK-based guidance by a committee of independent experts that recommends everyone in the UK should take vitamin D supplements, rather than just some groups of the population, with the aim of ensuring the majority of the population has enough vitamin D in their blood to protect the health of their bones.

Mr Carl Gibson, chief executive officer of CMA said: “vitamin D is generally known as the sunshine vitamin, as skin exposure to sunlight is the most common way for vitamin D to be absorbed into the body. Whilst this latest report was UK based, it is a timely reminder that with between 31% and 58% of Australians found to suffer from vitamin D deficiency,¹ we cannot assume that Australians receive adequate vitamin D from casual exposure to sunlight.”

“A responsible and preventative approach is to acknowledge that a large proportion of the population is vitamin D deficient and not just those at high risk. This is where vitamin D fortified foods and vitamin D supplements come into the disease prevention equation. More of us should be supplementing vitamin D as it is a cost-effective and easy approach to avoiding vitamin D deficiencies,” Mr Gibson explained.

“This latest guidance follows the publication, earlier this year, of an article in *MJA InSight*² encouraging proactive vitamin D supplementation rather than testing for patients seen to be at risk of deficiency.”

“Vitamin D plays an important role in regulating the amount of calcium and phosphate in the body, which makes it essential for bone health. Without enough vitamin D, bones can become thin and brittle. Limited amounts of vitamin D are found in foods such as oily fish, liver, eggs, milk and fortified cereals, but for most people the majority of their vitamin D is made from the action of sunlight on their skin.”

CMA strongly advocates following the instructions and dosage guidance on supplement product labels, as with any medication, and to seek advice from a healthcare provider.

ENDS

¹ Boyages, S.C. (2016). Vitamin D testing: new targeted guidelines stem the overtesting tide. *MJA* 204 (1) doi: 10.5694/mja15.00497

² Swannell, C. (2016) Supplement vitamin D rather than test. *MJA InSight*
<https://www.mja.com.au/insight/2016/1/supplement-vitamin-d-rather-test>

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