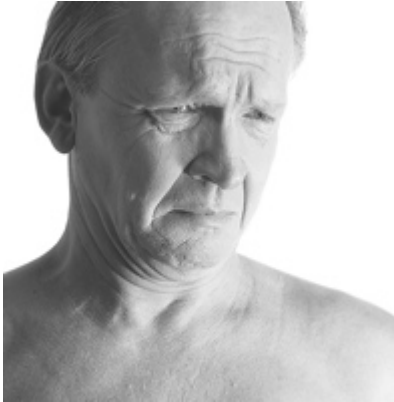


# The Depressing Truth About Vitamin D Deficiency



Scientists evaluated the effects of vitamin D on the mental health of 80 elderly patients, half of whom were stricken with a mild case of Alzheimer's disease and the rest of whom had no problems with dementia.

The patients were evaluated using a battery of standard tests. Those with the lowest levels of vitamin D were 11 times more prone to be

depressed than those who received healthy doses. Moreover, 58 percent of patients had abnormally lower vitamin D levels than the mean.

Vitamin D deficiency is common in older adults, and has previously been implicated in both psychiatric and neurological disorders.

[American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry](#)  
**December 2006; 14(12): 1032-1040**

---

## Dr. Mercola's Comment:

If you remain skeptical at all about the beneficial effects vitamin D has [on your body](#), here's a study that shows dramatically what happens to seniors when they avoid getting a healthy dose of sunshine every day.

Getting your vitamin D naturally from safe sunshine exposure is the best way to go, as it works just like a drug to treat [all kinds of conditions](#) apart from depression. The LA Times recently called it the ultimate "[wonder drug](#)."

Diseases that vitamin D positively influences include:

- [Heart Disease](#)
- [Cancer](#)
- [Diabetes](#)
- [Inflammatory Bowel Disease](#)
- [Rheumatoid Arthritis](#)
- [Multiple Sclerosis](#)
- [Osteoporosis](#)

Vitamin D can also strengthen bones and the immune system, provide pain relief, and prevent schizophrenia. It's truly an amazing chemical; it's actually a hormone rather than, strictly speaking, a vitamin, and the most powerful hormone in your body at that, active in quantities as small as 1/1,000,000,000,000 of a gram.

If you choose to boost your intake of vitamin D in the winter with cod liver oil or any other supplement, however, please be sure to have your blood regularly monitored to ensure [you don't overdose](#).

[Vital Votes](#) reader Tom from Grandview, Ohio shares the following story:

*"Vitamin D is very important, and sun exposure is indeed the best source. A good dose of sunshine without use of toxic sunscreen is the best thing for your skin. I do take cod liver oil daily (even in the summer), and I supplement with all the essential vitamins and minerals, as well as many herbal supplements.*

*"Although I am fair-skinned, and used to get sunburned easily, I no longer experience sunburn, and I have not used a sun-block in over two years. Even after longer than recommended sun exposure I am seemingly unaffected by the sun's damaging rays. Supplementation has made my skin healthier, more supple, and much more resistant to abrasions. Skin injuries heal faster, as well.*

*"I knew my skin had become healthier, so I put it to the test this year. Last May, my wife and I vacationed 2 weeks on the equator. I used no sunscreen, spending a great deal of time outdoors during peak solar hours, and I did not burn at all. I tanned slightly, and never experienced sunburn.*

*"I did not lay out in the sun, as I do not believe that to be wise, but I swam, walked, and played in the sun with no ill effects. Had I done this two years ago, I would have burnt to a crisp. I am a 59 year old builder, and am outside a great deal, so sun exposure is nothing new to me. My sun tolerance ability has improved tremendously.*

*"Proper diet, good supplementation, and moderate exercise helps in so many ways. This is but one example of their effectiveness."*

Other responses to this article can be viewed at [Vital Votes](#), and you can add your own thoughts or vote on comments by [first registering at Vital Votes](#).