

Vitamin D may help prevent and treat diseases associated with aging, study finds

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Vitamin D may play a vital role in the prevention and treatment of diseases associated with aging, according to researchers at Loyola University Chicago Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing (MNSON). These findings were published in the latest issue of the *Journal of Aging and Gerontology*.

Researchers reviewed evidence that suggests an association between vitamin D deficiency and chronic diseases associated with aging such as cognitive decline, depression, osteoporosis, cardiovascular disease, [high blood pressure](#), Type 2 diabetes and cancer.

"Vitamin D deficiency is a common, serious medical condition that significantly affects the health and well-being of older adults," said Sue Penckofer, PhD, RN, study author and full professor, MNSON.

Older adults are at risk for vitamin D deficiency due to diet, reduced time outdoors and poor skin absorption of the nutrient. With the number of people ages 65 and older expected to more than double from 2012 to 2060, the problem will become much more prevalent.

"Better understanding the relationship between vitamin D and chronic diseases in [older adults](#) and whether treatment of vitamin D deficiency can prevent or treat these disorders is important given the increasing number of people at risk for these health issues," said Meghan Meehan, FNP-BC '13, study author, MN SON.

The Institute of Medicine generally recommends that adults up to 70 years of age take 600 IU of vitamin D daily and adults over the age of 70 consume 800 IU of the nutrient daily.

Study authors concluded that as the older population continues to grow, universal guidelines for testing and treating vitamin D deficiency are needed. Research to examine the proper dosing of vitamin D supplements necessary to prevent the [chronic diseases](#) of aging also would have significant benefit for future generations.

Provided by Loyola University Health System

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