

# High levels of vitamin D in older people can reduce heart disease and diabetes

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(PhysOrg.com) -- Middle aged and elderly people with high levels of vitamin D could reduce their chances of developing heart disease or diabetes by 43%, according to researchers at the University of Warwick.

Middle aged and elderly people with high levels of vitamin D could reduce their chances of developing [heart disease](#) or diabetes by 43%, according to researchers at the University of Warwick.

A team of researchers at Warwick Medical School carried out a systematic literature review of studies examining vitamin D and cardiometabolic disorders. Cardiometabolic disorders include cardiovascular disease, [type 2 diabetes](#) mellitus and [metabolic syndrome](#).

Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin that is naturally present in some foods and is also produced when ultraviolet rays from sunlight strike the skin and trigger vitamin D synthesis. Fish such as salmon, tuna and mackerel are good sources of vitamin D, and it is also available as a dietary supplement.

Researchers looked at 28 studies including 99,745 participants across a variety of ethnic groups including men and women. The studies revealed a significant association between high levels of vitamin D and a decreased risk of developing cardiovascular disease (33% compared to low levels of vitamin D), type 2 diabetes (55% reduction) and metabolic syndrome (51% reduction).

The literature review, published in the journal *Maturitas*, was led by Johanna Parker and Dr Oscar Franco, Assistant Professor in Public Health at Warwick Medical School.

Dr Franco said: “We found that high levels of vitamin D among middle age and elderly populations are associated with a substantial decrease in [cardiovascular disease](#), type 2 [diabetes](#) and metabolic syndrome.

“Targeting [vitamin D deficiency](#) in adult populations could potentially slow the current epidemics of cardiometabolic disorders.”

All studies included were published between 1990 and 2009 with the majority published between 2004 and 2009. Half of the studies were conducted in the United States, eight were European, two studies were from Iran, three from Australasia and one from India.

**More information:** Parker J, Hashmi O, Dutton D, Mavrodaris A, Stranges S, Kandala NB, Clarke A, Franco OH. Levels of vitamin D and cardiometabolic disorders: Systematic review and meta-analysis. *Maturitas*. 2010 Feb; 65:225-236

Provided by University of Warwick

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