

Trial tests if vitamin D pill can help asthma

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Could a simple vitamin D pill better control people's asthma symptoms when taken with regularly inhaled steroids than the steroids alone? Northwestern Medicine researchers are testing that concept with a new trial for adults who have been diagnosed with asthma and are non-smokers.

Some patients' asthma remains uncontrolled even when they regularly take inhaled steroids. One reason might be that [inhaled steroids](#) don't work well in people with low Vitamin D levels. This may be related to increasing evidence that Vitamin D is a critical factor in reducing [inflammation](#). Up to 30 percent of the U.S. population may have low [vitamin D](#) levels.

"Although asthma is common, it remains poorly understood and, in many cases, poorly treated," said lead investigator Lewis J. Smith, M.D., professor of medicine at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and a physician at Northwestern Memorial Hospital. "The possibility that improving treatment may be as easy as taking a vitamin is exciting."

The VIDA Study is supported by the AsthmaNet grant awarded to Northwestern University, the University of Chicago and Children's Memorial Hospital. These institutions along with Rush University/Stroger Hospital comprise the Chicagoland Metropolitan AsthmaNet consortium, which is one of nine AsthmaNet research programs across the United States participating in this study.

AsthmaNet is funded by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health.

As many as 1,600 people will be screened nationally so that about 400 people can be randomized in this study. Northwestern and the other Chicago sites will enroll approximately 60 subjects.

Provided by Northwestern University

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