



Vitamin D Supplements Could Prevent Dementia



A new study suggests that taking vitamin D supplements may help prevent dementia. The study, conducted by researchers from the University of Calgary's Hotchkiss Brain Institute in Canada and the University of Exeter in the U.K., examined over 12,388 participants from the U.S. National Alzheimer's Coordinating Center. Study participants had a mean age of 71 and were free of dementia when enrolled. They were evaluated for their vitamin D supplementation and dementia status. Of the group, 37% reported taking vitamin D supplements.

Study researchers found that participants who took vitamin D supplements had a longer dementia-free period, with 40% fewer dementia diagnoses in this group. Over ten years, 2,696 participants in the study developed dementia. Of these, 75% had not been exposed to vitamin D before diagnosis, while 25% had baseline exposure.

The research was led by Professor Zahinoor Ismail from the University of Calgary and the University of Exeter. He explains that earlier supplementation may be more effective in reducing the risk of dementia, especially before the onset of cognitive decline.

Although vitamin D was effective in all groups, the study showed that its effects were more significant in females than males. Similarly, the effects were more pronounced in people with normal cognition than in those who reported signs of mild cognitive impairment, which is associated with a higher risk of dementia.

Also, the effects of vitamin D were more significant in individuals without the APOEε4 gene, which is associated with a higher risk of Alzheimer's dementia, compared to those who carry the gene. Therefore, the researchers hypothesise that carriers of the gene may absorb vitamin D more efficiently, which could decrease the impact of vitamin D supplementation. However, the study did not include blood tests to confirm this hypothesis.

Dr Byron Creese, a co-author from the University of Exeter, emphasised the importance of preventing or delaying the onset of dementia and stated that the study's findings suggest that taking vitamin D supplements could be beneficial in achieving this goal. However, more clinical trials are necessary to confirm this. The ongoing VitaMIND study at the University of Exeter aims to explore this issue further by randomly assigning participants to take vitamin D or placebo and measuring changes in memory and cognitive function over time.

Source: [University of Exeter](#)

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