

# Vitamin D Prevents Flu by Jeffrey Dach MD

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A new study published Feb 23 in the Archives of Internal Medicine revealed a striking link between Vitamin D levels and the Flu, also known as the common cold. Patients with low vitamin D levels were found to be 40% more likely to suffer a recent bout of flu illness.

This study suggests Vitamin D is important for proper functioning of our immune system. Higher levels of vitamin D enhance the immune system and fight off viral illness like the flu. Vitamin D is actually a hormone which attaches directly to cellular DNA and is involved in prevention of heart disease, autoimmune diseases such as multiple sclerosis, and prevents cancer. Low vitamin D levels have been associated with increased all cause mortality.

For more about Vitamin D, click here:

[Vitamin D Deficiency, the Ignored Epidemic of the Developed World by Jeffrey Dach MD](#)

## References and Links

<http://archinte.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/abstract/169/4/384> Association Between Serum 25-Hydroxyvitamin D Level and Upper Respiratory Tract Infection in the Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. Adit A. Ginde, MD, MPH; Jonathan M. Mansbach, MD; Carlos A. Camargo Jr, MD, DrPHArch Intern Med. 2009;169(4):384-390.

**Background** Recent studies suggest a role for vitamin D in innate immunity, including the prevention of respiratory tract infections (RTIs). We hypothesize that serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D (25[OH]D) levels are inversely associated with self-reported recent upper RTI (URTI).

**Methods** We performed a secondary analysis of the Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, a probability survey of the US population conducted between 1988 and 1994. We examined the association between 25(OH)D level and recent URTI in 18 883 participants 12 years and older. The analysis adjusted for demographics and clinical factors (season, body mass index, smoking history, asthma, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease).

**Results** The median serum 25(OH)D level was 29 ng/mL (to convert to nanomoles per liter, multiply by 2.496) (interquartile range, 21-37 ng/mL), and 19% (95% confidence interval [CI], 18%-20%) of participants reported a recent URTI. Recent URTI was reported by 24% of participants with 25(OH)D levels less than 10 ng/mL, by 20% with levels of 10 to less than 30 ng/mL, and by 17% with levels of 30 ng/mL or more ( $P < .001$ ). Even after adjusting for demographic and clinical characteristics, lower 25(OH)D levels were independently associated with recent URTI (compared with 25[OH]D levels of 30 ng/mL: odds ratio [OR], 1.36; 95% CI, 1.01-1.84 for  $<10$  ng/mL and 1.24; 1.07-1.43 for 10 to  $<30$  ng/mL). The association between 25(OH)D level and URTI seemed to be stronger in individuals with asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (OR, 5.67 and 2.26, respectively).

**Conclusions** Serum 25(OH)D levels are inversely associated with recent URTI. This association may be stronger in those with respiratory tract diseases. Randomized controlled trials are warranted to explore the effects of vitamin D supplementation on RTI.

Adit A. Ginde; Jonathan M. Mansbach; Carlos A. Camargo Jr.  
Association Between Serum 25-Hydroxyvitamin D Level and Upper Respiratory Tract Infection in the

Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. Archives of Internal Medicine, 2009; 169 (4): 384 DOI: 10.1001/archinternmed.2008.560

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/02/090223221242.htm>

Vitamin D Deficiency May Increase Risk Of Colds, Flu

ScienceDaily (Feb. 24, 2009) — Vitamin D may be an important way to arm the immune system against disorders like the common cold, report investigators from the University of Colorado Denver (UC Denver) School of Medicine, Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) and Children's Hospital Boston.

Study participants with the lowest vitamin D blood levels – less than 10 ng per milliliter of blood – were about 40 percent more likely to report having a recent respiratory infection than were those with vitamin D levels of 30 or higher. The association was present in all seasons and even stronger among participants with a history of asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), including emphysema. Asthma patients with the lowest vitamin D levels were five times more likely to have had a recent respiratory infection; while among COPD patients, respiratory infections were twice as common among those with vitamin D deficiency.

<http://www.cnn.com/2009/HEALTH/02/24/health.vitamind.cold/>

Vitamin D may protect against common cold.

Deficiency of vitamin D is common, particularly in winter. People with low blood levels of vitamin D more likely to report a recent cold By Theresa Tamkins, Vitamin D may protect people -- especially those with asthma and other chronic lung conditions -- from colds and other respiratory tract infections, according to the largest study to date to look at the link.

People with low blood levels of vitamin D were more likely to have had a recent cold.

<http://health.msn.com/health-topics/cold-and-flu/articlepage.aspx?cp-documentid=>

Too Little Vitamin D May Mean More Colds and Flu

By Alan Mozes, HealthDay Reporter MONDAY, Feb. 23 (HealthDay News) --

Forget the apple. The largest study of its kind to date shows that vitamin D each and every day is what will keep the doctor away when it comes to the common cold or the flu.

<http://jeffreydach.com/2007/06/10/vitamin-d-deficiency--by-jeffrey-dach-md.aspx>

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by Jeffrey Dach MD

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