



CARE BEYOND the VIAL



1224 East 4th Street, Vinton, Iowa 52349 Ph# (319)472-4731
A Clingman Pharmacy Exclusive!

The Sunshine Vitamin - Vitamin D Vitamin, Hormone and Protector

“The sun,—the bright sun, that brings back, not light alone, but new life, and hope, and freshness to man—burst upon the crowded city in clear and radiant glory. Through costly-coloured glass and paper-mended window, through cathedral dome and rotten crevice, it shed its equal ray.” — **Charles Dickens, Oliver Twist**

“Here sat Marilla Cuthbert, when she sat at all, slightly distrustful of sunshine, which seemed to her too dancing and irresponsible a thing for a world which was meant to be taken seriously...” — **L.M. Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables**

“It's a secret deal. On some days, the sun shines bright on you. On some days, you've got to shine brighter than the sun.” — **Sharad Vivek Sagar**

A little fun in the sun with some interesting quotes before I share with you a bit of information on Vitamin D, probably the most complex vitamin we need. This is because we are still learning about many of its actions within the human body.

Vitamin D was first discovered and classified as a vitamin around 1922. At that time they did not know that the body was able to produce its own vitamin D. A great deal of study followed this discovery and eventually Vitamin D became reclassified as a hormone because of its ability to work with other hormones in the parathyroid gland. These actions are based upon the amount of calcium in our blood stream at any given time. When calcium levels in our blood stream drop, a parathyroid hormone signals the kidney to produce more active vitamin D (calcitriol). This hormonal version of Vitamin D then prompts the intestines to transfer more calcium from food into the blood stream. When our diet is too low in calcium, calcitriol and the parathyroid hormone work together to trigger a process that allows stored calcium to be mobilized from the bone.

While this may be too complex to remember, the important thing to take from this is that it is very important to include enough calcium and vitamin D in our diets. When our diets are lacking these important nutrients our body seeks to find its needed calcium from our bones. This eventually can lead to soft or porous bones and increase our risk of bone fractures etc. This bone protecting property of Vitamin D is still considered its most important function.

The areas of study regarding the actions and benefits of Vitamin D have really flourished in recent years.

In addition to its bone protection, the following represent a summary of other potential health benefits:

- Reduce skeletal muscle weakness and pain**
- Improve secondary hyperparathyroidism associated with chronic kidney disease**
- Cardiovascular risk reduction in patients with chronic kidney disease**
- Improve Skin Health**
- Protect against Allergens and enhance Asthma control**
- Reduces risk of Autoimmune diseases**
- Protects against Type II Diabetes**
- Neurological function support**



Jon Clingman, R. ph
e-mail
j.clingman@fmtcs.com

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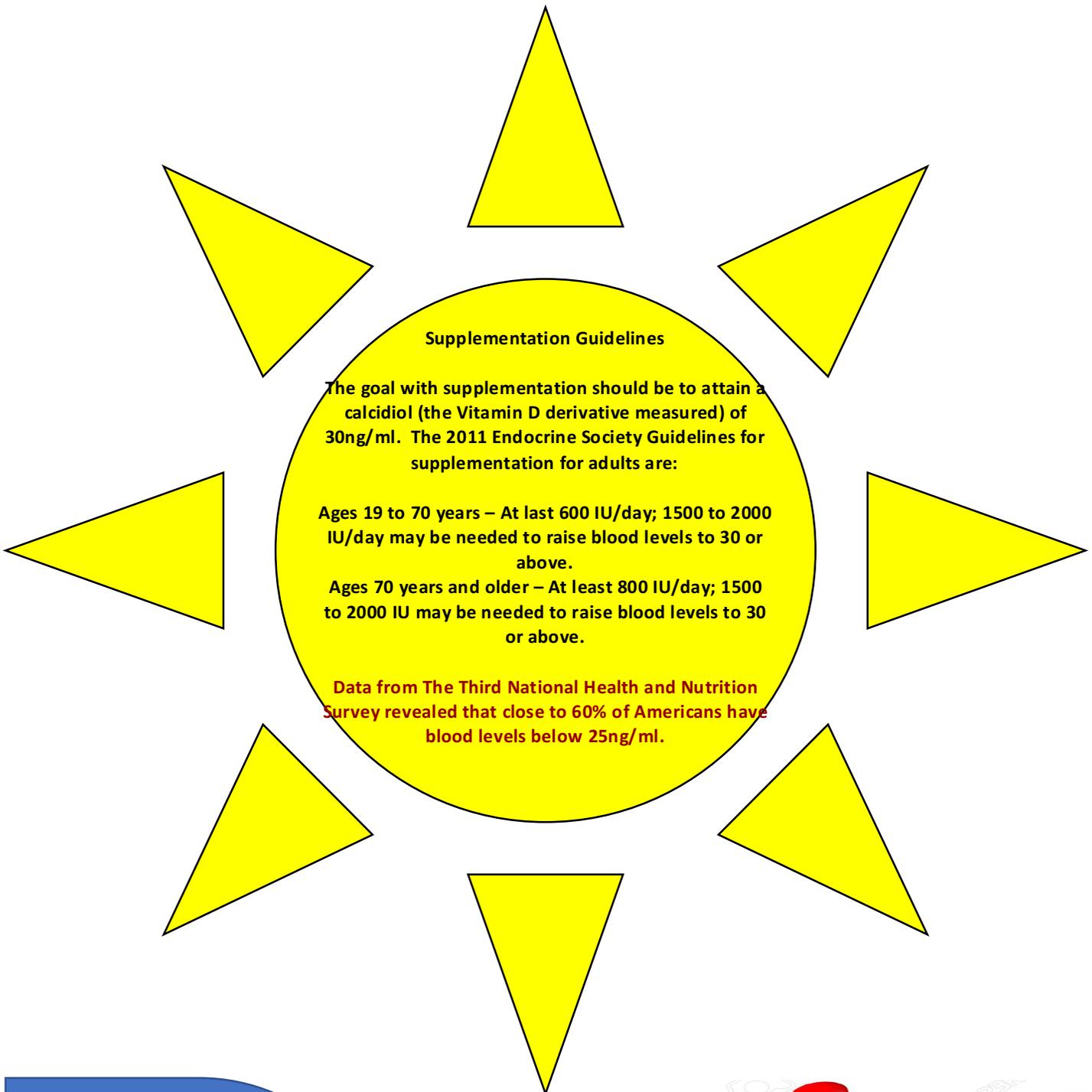
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Roadblocks preventing Vitamin D from doing its job

The inability to attain enough sun exposure – In order for Vitamin D to be converted to its active form outside the kidney it must be irradiated by the UV rays of direct sunlight. This is a really tough obstacle to overcome for those who have skin cancer concerns and have been advised to avoid direct sunlight as much as possible. Please stick to the advice of your physician. For those who are still able to be in the sun 15 to 20 minutes of daily exposure between 11AM and 3PM is recommended.

Lack of adequate dietary sources- While many foods have been fortified with Vitamin D in the past several years there are few that contain it naturally. Given the increasing daily recommendations needed to counter a diagnosed deficiency it has become much harder to attain enough Vitamin D through diet alone.



While all supplements contain an inactive version of Vitamin D, Vitamin D3 is considered the more potent form.

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Recommended Action Plan

Begin by talking with your physician about whether you are a candidate for Vitamin D and have them run a blood test to see if you are Vitamin D deficient. Non-prescription supplements are available as well. Talk to your pharmacist before you start to make sure it does not interact with any of your current medications.

