

High doses of vitamin D improve balance in senior citizens

Published on : Monday 05 Oct 2009 8:41 - by Kirti Patel

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Senior citizens may be well advised to dial D for better balance. It seems [vitamin D supplement](#) can help the elderly prevent frequent falls.

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A Swiss study has found high doses of vitamin D2 and D3 can reduce falls among those above the age of 65 years by 19 and 26 per cent, respectively.



Researchers from University Hospital Zurich studied data on 2,500 elderly subjects given two doses of [vitamin D2](#) and D3 – 700-1,000 or 200-600 international units a day – or placebo or calcium supplements in eight clinical trials.

They found higher doses of the vitamins lowered risk of fall by 19 per cent compared with placebo and calcium. Daily doses of more than 700 IU of vitamin D2 meant 12 per cent lower chances of tumbling and of vitamin D3 26 per cent.

Balance of subjects on vitamin D supplements improved significantly in two-five months, reducing risk of falls by as much as 38 per cent. Over the long

run, or one year or more of supplements, the risk fell 17 per cent.

Heike Bischoff-Ferrari, lead author of the study, said, "We found greater fall reduction in studies with a maximum vitamin D daily dose of 1,000 IU a day than in studies with lower doses. Therefore, higher doses may be even more effective." The vitamin boosts muscle strength and hence, improves balance, said the researchers in a report published in British Medical Journal.

However, 1,000 IU is above the US Institute of Medicine's daily recommendation of 400 IU for those aged between 51 and 70 years and 600 IU for 70 years plus people.

But Bischoff-Ferrari said it might be time to revise old recommendations, a process the US Institute of Medicine has already started. "Falls are important events to prevent and 700 to 1,000 IU of vitamin D a day is safe and inexpensive," she said.

Earlier studies have shown vitamin D can prevent some types of cancers and even [cardiovascular diseases](#). It is synthesised by the body during sun exposure and found in [cod liver oil](#), fatty fishes, milk and milk products, egg, beef, etc.

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Comments on High doses of vitamin D improve balance in senior citizens

This is not a high dose, it is just higher than currently recommended. Optimum vitamin d3 requires a minimum 1000IU per 25lbs of body weight. There are no recorded cases of toxicity up to 10,000IU of D3 per day plus sun exposure.

By » **Pete** on 2009-10-05 13:48:21

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