

# Health Awareness

## Vitamin D Deficiency: Is Your Family At Risk?

(NAPSA)—According to some experts, nearly 50 percent of Americans have less than optimal blood levels of vitamin D. Is your family getting enough of this very important vitamin?

“Most Americans know vitamin D helps strengthen bones and teeth, but there is a wealth of new evidence showing it helps promote colon health and also helps support the immune system function. That’s important, because a healthy immune system is critical for overall health and wellness,” said Marie Spano, MS, RD, a vitamin expert and consultant for Wellesse™ supplements. “What’s troubling is the number of people who are unknowingly vitamin D deficient,” she added.

Spano says many experts believe the current Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) of vitamin D is too low. “It’s double jeopardy. Many Americans don’t meet the RDA of 400 International Units [IUs] of vitamin D and many experts recommend consuming an even greater amount, up to 1,000 IUs of vitamin D daily.”

To determine if your family is at risk, Spano says to consider the following:

**Where Do You Live?** Vitamin D is sometimes called the sunshine vitamin since our bodies create vitamin D3—the preferable form of vitamin D—from sunlight exposure. However, living in Northern states where sun exposure is reduced, especially during the winter, or living in smog-filled urban areas, may make it difficult to attain sufficient vitamin D from the sun alone. Plus, many dermatologists don’t recommend getting vitamin D from the sun, due to skin cancer risk.

**Do You Spend A Lot Of Time Indoors And/Or Wear Sunscreen?** If you’re indoors a great deal or wear sunscreen when outside, you may also be vitamin D deficient.

**Are You Young Or Old?** One study of more than 380 children and teens found that more than



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one-half had low blood levels of vitamin D. The elderly, too, are often vitamin D deficient.

**What’s Your Ethnicity?** African Americans and those with a darker skin pigment make far less vitamin D than other populations.

**Do You Drink Enough Milk? Eat Beef Liver?** Fortified milk is a good source of vitamin D. To meet the RDA from milk alone, adults need to drink four cups of milk daily. Nonfortified dietary sources of vitamin D include sardines, mackerel, herring and beef liver. For most Americans, these are not daily food choices, so alternate vitamin D sources are needed.

To learn your vitamin D levels, ask your doctor about a rapid vitamin D test that measures your blood levels of the vitamin. To increase vitamin D intake, Spano suggests families add a liquid vitamin D supplement, such as new Wellesse Vitamin D3, to their daily regimen. “Liquid supplements are an easy way for the whole family to get enough vitamin D. They are especially helpful with young children and teens who don’t like swallowing pills.”

Wellesse Vitamin D is available at Walgreens and Stop & Shop. For more information, including a coupon for \$2.00 off Wellesse Vitamin D, visit [www.wellesse.com](http://www.wellesse.com).