

Science Proves that Avoiding Sunshine Doubles your Risk of Death

By: Jonathan Benson, Natural News

The merits of regular sun exposure for optimal health have been reiterated by one of the most comprehensive studies yet to look at the connection between vitamin D and early mortality. Researchers from Sweden, after compiling the results of a 20-year research project they started back in the early 1990s, found that avoiding natural sunlight, or slathering yourself with sunscreen every time you go outside, can actually double your risk of premature death.

The study out of the Karolinska Institute in Solna evaluated nearly 30,000 women over the course of two decades, tracking their outdoor behaviors in conjunction with rates of cancer and early mortality. During this time, the women were asked to fill out questionnaires at certain intervals indicating how often they went to tanning salons or spent time outside in direct sunlight without sunscreen.

At the end of the study period, a total of 2,545 women died, and many of these women had previously admitted to spending little or no time outdoors in the sun. On the flip side, women who regularly spent time in the sun, allowing their skin to absorb vitamin D from the sun's ultraviolet B (UVB) rays, had much lower rates of early death. Overall, women who avoided the sun were determined to have a doubled risk of dying early.

"The results of this study clearly showed that mortality was about double in women who avoided sun exposure compared to the highest exposure group," stated lead study author Dr. Pelle Lindqvist about the findings. "Sun exposure advice which is very restrictive in countries with low solar intensity might in fact be harmful for women's health."

Skin melanomas caused by too little sunlight, reveals study

Though often blamed as the most prominent cause of skin cancer, sun exposure was also found in the study to have protective benefits. Fewer women in the sun-exposed group developed skin melanomas, according to the study, and these same women were also 10 percent less likely to die from skin cancer compared to women who avoided the sun.

This flies in the face of government recommendations from both the U.S. and Canada that urge people to avoid the sun to protect against skin cancer. Not only does avoiding the sun actually increase skin cancer risk, but it also puts people at an increased risk of developing other conditions associated with vitamin D deficiency, including supposedly eradicated conditions like rickets.

"As the authors comment, our bodies need sunlight to make essential vitamin D, which can help us resist some cancer types," said Professor Dorothy Bennett from St. George's University in London to *The Telegraph*. "Those who normally avoid the sun and/or cover most of their skin are advised to take vitamin D supplements."

With more than half of the world's population now believed to be vitamin D deficient, the new recommendations could not be more timely. Every system of the body requires vitamin D at levels far higher than the average person likely receives on a daily basis, a message that groups like the Vitamin D Council are spreading far and wide in the interest of public health.

"Vitamin D deficiency causes growth retardation and rickets in children and will precipitate and exacerbate osteopenia, osteoporosis and increase risk of fracture in adults," explains a 2008 study on vitamin D and health published in the journal *Advances in Experimental Medicine and Biology*. "The vitamin D deficiency has been associated pandemic with other serious consequences including increased risk of common cancers, autoimmune diseases, infectious diseases and cardiovascular disease."

Sources for this article include:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk>

<http://www.businessinsider.com>