

Lack of Vitamin D can Lead to Chronic Pain, Depression: Study

By: Ethan A. Huff, Natural News

Supplementing with vitamin D can help mitigate the pain and depression often associated with type 2 diabetes, says a new study out of Loyola University in Chicago. Researchers there found that women with the disease who suffered from numbness, tingling and pain in their hands, fingers and legs, as well as those with depression issues, benefited when taking regular high doses of vitamin D.

As reported by the Vitamin D Council, the study aimed to further explain the link between vitamin D deficiency and the pain and depression associated with type 2 diabetes. To do so, they evaluated a group of depressed women who were instructed to take a weekly dose of 50,000 international units (IU) of vitamin D2, which some studies suggest is actually inferior to the more popular vitamin D3.

For six months, the women took the supplement and reported their symptoms to study facilitators. At the beginning of the study, 61 percent of the women reported pain in their legs and feet, while 74 percent reported numbness and tingling in their hands, fingers and legs. But these percentages dropped notably three months into the study, as well as at the six-month conclusion, according to the study's lead author.

"Pain is a common and often serious problem for women with type 2 diabetes and depression," says Tom Doyle from Loyola's Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neurosciences. "While further research is needed, D2 supplementation is a promising treatment for both pain and depression in type 2 diabetes."

NIH grants funding for research into the benefits of vitamin D3 in women with diabetes

Following the release of the study, which was presented at a recent conference held at Loyola's Health Sciences Campus, the National Institute of Nursing Research, part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), decided to fund further research into the benefits of vitamin D. This time, however, researchers will look at the benefits of vitamin D3, which is believed to be more bioavailable than vitamin D2, and thus more effective.

"Vitamin D has widespread benefits for our health and certain chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes," adds Dr. Sue Penckofer, co-author of the study. "This NIH grant will allow us to shed greater light on understanding the role that this nutrient plays in managing the health of women with diabetes."

As you may already know, vitamin D deficiency has previously been linked to markers of type 2 diabetes,

as well as to neurological pain and depression. A growing body of evidence, for instance, suggests that individuals with low or deficient levels of vitamin D have the highest risk of developing type 2 diabetes later on in life. Vitamin D also appears to play a critical role in regulating pancreatic beta-cell function, insulin action and inflammation.

On the flip side, supplementing with vitamin D can help correct many of the biological functions associated with type 2 diabetes, including insulin sensitivity and blood sugar levels. Though more large-scale intervention studies are needed to verify the benefits of vitamin D intake with regard to type 2 diabetes and its corresponding symptoms, existing evidence already suggests that it can provide substantial benefits.

"Vitamin D acts on the areas of your brain that are linked to depression," explains the Vitamin D Council. "Lack of vitamin D may also be one of many factors that contribute to a depressed mood."

To learn more about the importance of vitamin D, be sure to visit the Vitamin D Council's website:
<http://www.vitamindcouncil.org>.

Sources for this article include:

<http://hsd.luc.edu>

<http://www.vitamindcouncil.org>