

# Vitamin D and Smokers' Lungs

By

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# Introduction

- A new study suggesting that lung capacity may deteriorate faster in smokers who have a vitamin D deficit than in those with standard vitamin D levels, triggered this post, in which I want to examine the exact role Vitamin D (popularly called the sunlight vitamin) plays in [smoking cessation](#) and why it's a 'must-not-do-without' in the quit smoking journey. Enjoy it!

# What is Vitamin D?

- According to the [Office of Dietary Supplements](#), Vitamin D is “a fat-soluble vitamin that is naturally present in very few foods, added to others, and available as a dietary supplement. Vitamin D is obtained from sun exposure, food, and supplements”. Unlike water-soluble vitamins (which cannot be stored in the body), Vitamin D is fat-soluble (can be stored in the body).

## What is Vitamin D?(2)

- It facilitates the assimilation and conversion of phosphorous and calcium. People who are exposed to normal sunlight rays do not need vitamin D supplements because sunlight encourages adequate vitamin D production in the skin. **Five forms of vitamin D** have been uncovered. They are; vitamin D<sub>1</sub>, D<sub>2</sub>, D<sub>3</sub>, D<sub>4</sub>, D<sub>5</sub>. The two forms that appear to matter to humans the most are vitamins D<sub>2</sub> (ergocalciferol) and D<sub>3</sub> (cholecalciferol).

# In Which Foods Can Vitamin D Be Found?

- Very few foods in nature contain Vitamin D but it can be found in the flesh of fatty fish like salmon, herring, mackerel, tuna and fish liver oils. Small quantities of vitamin D can also be found in mushrooms, beef liver, cheese and egg yolks. Due to the fact that Vitamin D is not abundant in many natural foods, the vitamin is made available through dairy products, juices, and cereals that are then said to be “fortified with vitamin D.” But most vitamin D – 80 percent to 90 percent – of what the body gets – is gotten through exposure to sunlight.

# What Are the Benefits of Vitamin D?

- Vitamin D helps the intestines to assimilate and breakdown phosphorous and calcium, which help to maintain healthy bones, among other functions.
- It regulates the body's immune system, thereby preventing auto-immune diseases (an illness that occurs when the body tissues are attacked by its own immune system), and preventing cancer.

# What Are the Benefits of Vitamin D?(2)

- Vitamin D is also indicated for preventing and taking care of rickets, a disease that is caused by not having enough vitamin D (Vitamin D deficiency).
- According to scientists from the University of Colorado Denver School of Medicine, Massachusetts General Hospital and Children's Hospital Boston, [Vitamin D protects against common cold and flu.](#)

# What Are the Benefits of Vitamin D?(3)

- Vitamin D also lowers the risk of cancer. Research by Cedric F. Garland, Dr PH, of the University of California, San Diego, linked low vitamin D levels to a higher risk of breast, ovarian, kidney, pancreatic and aggressive prostate cancer.
- Garland and his colleagues stated that the frequency of colon cancer in Canada and the United States of America could be slashed by 50% if people took 2,000 IU of vitamin D per day, and that women would trim down the prevalence of breast cancer by half if they consumed 3,500 IU of vitamin D daily.



# What Are the Benefits of Vitamin D?(4)

- Another research conducted at the Medical College of Georgia, United States of America links [Vitamin D to preventing obesity.](#)
- [In yet another study,](#) sufficient Vitamin D Levels were found to significantly reduce heart disease risk. Vitamin D has been indicated for so many functions and one can generally say: it normalizes blood pressure, eases stress and tension, alleviates body aches and pains by decreasing muscle seizures and reduces respiratory illnesses.

# What Are the Benefits of Vitamin D?(5)

- Vitamin D also assists in delineation of the body cells, improves insulin sensitivity, battles depression, advances general skin health by reducing wrinkles, and perks up cardiovascular strength or vigor by protecting the blood vessels with a lining.

# How Does Vitamin D Assist Smoking Cessation?

- Vitamin D is said to play a crucial role in the [stop smoking](#) process. It is connected to dwindling rates of many forms of cancer, including lung cancer. In his book titled: “Quitting Cold: A Guide to Quit Smoking,” Carling Kalicak states that vitamin D is also good for bringing depression and stress to the barest minimum. These 2 [withdrawal symptoms](#) (stress and depression) manifest in the first few days of smoking cessation. Kalicak further recommends that smokers start consuming vitamin D supplements one to two weeks before dropping off cigarettes.

# How Does Vitamin D Assist Smoking Cessation?(2)

- In a recent study, [published July 19 in advance](#) of print publication in the *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine*, boosting Vitamin D levels was discovered to render some form of protection to the lungs from the [effects of cigarette smoking](#), even though researchers warned that, it won't prevent weakening lung capacity or smoking-induced diseases, such as stroke, cancer and heart disease.

# How Does Vitamin D Assist Smoking Cessation?(3)

- According to Lead researcher, Dr. Nancy Lange, of the Channing Laboratory at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, "vitamin D, possibly due to its antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects, could provide a small amount of protection against lung damage that occurs from smoking."
- However, Lange stated that the effect was minute and the most important way to develop healthy lungs and body is for people to [quit smoking](#).

# How Does Vitamin D Assist Smoking Cessation?(4)

- Prior to this study, several studies have revealed that vitamin D helps strengthen lung capacity. If you have been smoking for some years, chances are your lung resistance against pollution or smoke has been damaged. Vitamin D can help your lungs get into better shape.

# How Does Vitamin D Assist Smoking Cessation?(5)

- One of such studies was published in the December, 2010 edition of [Chest Journal](#). Coordinated by [Peter N. Black of the University of Auckland](#), the study revealed that non-smokers who were consuming little vitamin D had 35% worse lung capacity than ex-smokers who were getting sufficient quantities of the vitamin. However, people who still smoke, regardless of their vitamin D ingestion, had worse lung function than either of these groups.

# **How Does Vitamin D Assist Smoking Cessation?(6)**

- The long and short of all these studies is that taking Vitamin D and getting enough sunshine exposure will help you maintain good health before and after smoking cessation. So, what are you waiting for? Get on the Vitamin D bandwagon, but consult your Doctor first. Read more about the daily recommended [Vitamin D dosage](#).



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