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More evidence on vitamin D and macular degeneration

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Healthy Living **Conditions & Treatments**

Consuming vitamin D from foods or supplements might reduce the risk of developing age-related macular degeneration (AMD) in women younger than 75, according to a study published this week by the Archives of Ophthalmology.



A team led by researchers at the University at Buffalo, N.Y., examined data on blood levels of [vitamin D](#) among 1,313 women 50 to 79 enrolled in the ongoing Women's Health Initiative study. In women younger than 75, vitamin D from foods and supplements—but not from time spent in direct sunlight—was linked with decreased risk of developing early [age-related macular degeneration](#). Those who consumed the most vitamin D had a 59 percent decreased risk of developing it compared with women who consumed the least.

The researchers suggest that vitamin D might help regulate the immune system and perhaps help prevent diseases, such as AMD, that are linked to inflammation. The top food sources of vitamin D in the study were milk, fish, fortified margarine and fortified cereal.

Bottom line. This is the second study to find that vitamin D might help protect against AMD, the researchers said, but more research is needed. Meanwhile, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has just released national data on vitamin D status in the U.S. population, which found that 9 percent to 28 percent of females were at risk of vitamin D inadequacy and up to 12 percent were at risk of vitamin D deficiency.

Read more about good [dietary sources of vitamin D](#) sources of vitamin D. And if you decide to take vitamin D supplements, choose one labeled "[USP Verified](#)," which indicates that it meets standards for purity and potency set by the U.S. Pharmacopeia, a nongovernmental authority, and have what the USP considers acceptable limits of contaminants. For a list of products that have been verified by the USP, go to [www.uspverified.org](#).

Sources

[Vitamin D Status and Early Age-Related Macular Degeneration in Postmenopausal Women](#) [Archives of Ophthalmology]

[Vitamin D Status: United States, 2001-2006](#) [CDC]

—Doug Podolsky

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