



December 6, 2010 – Grand Rapids, MI

Vitamin D Caution

After Saturday's message about the new RDA for vitamin D, I thought it was important to provide a word of caution regarding the use of vitamin D to cure colds.

There are several natural medicine websites that have recommended taking 1,000 to 2,000 IU of vitamin D3 per kilogram body weight every day for three days to attempt to cure a cold. I would strongly urge you not to do that; if you do the math, that's an extraordinary amount of vitamin D per day. If you weigh 100 kg (220 pounds), that works out to 200,000 IU of vitamin D every day. Okay, it's only for three days. What's the problem?

It's based on a theory, not research. The idea of treating infections such as the cold or the flu with vitamin D was discussed in a paper published in the journal *Alternative Medicine Review*. The authors speculated that pharmacological doses of vitamin D could theoretically stimulate the production of a naturally occurring antimicrobial found in white blood cells—but it was never attempted in a clinical trial. Until there's at least some clinical evidence that it's safe, I wouldn't do it. The reasons are many, from varying absorption rates to genetic differences in processing vitamin D. It may really cure a cold in some people; it could also harm others. I know a cold can make you really miserable, but it's not worth the risk.

As I said Saturday, base your vitamin D intake on your serum vitamin D levels. That's the best to boost your immune system and prevent the cold to begin with. Don't know what your level is? Maybe it's time to schedule your annual physical. If you're not sure what tests you need, listen to my audios, *Health Tips for Women* and *Health Tips for Men* for the recommended tests and why they're important. Both are available at drchet.com as CDs or audio downloads.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

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The health information in this message is designed for educational purposes only. It's not a substitute for medical advice from your healthcare provider, and you should not use it to diagnose or treat a health problem or disease. It's designed to motivate you to work toward better health, and that includes seeing your healthcare professional regularly. If what you've read raises any questions or concerns about health problems or possible diseases, talk to your healthcare provider today.

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