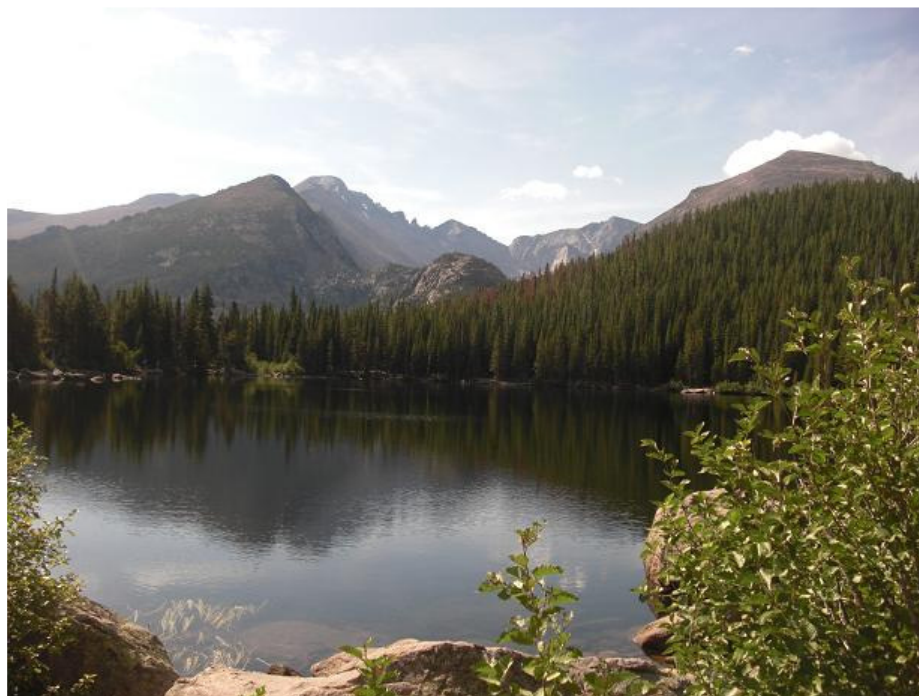


News from Northside Family Medicine!



Tip of the Month-


Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. A recent study confirmed a healthy breakfast is one of the most important keys to preventing and fighting obesity.

<http://www.webmd.com/diet/news/20090615/skip-breakfast-get-fat>

Vitamin D- Facts, Fiction and many things in between

Vitamin D- the wonder vitamin of late has had so much press lately it would appear that Vitamin D is the new fountain of youth. While it has many important functions and may have many great and important properties, its true promise may yet to be truly unveiled.

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How many people are deficient in Vitamin D?

According to a recent study from the federal government about 25% of the population is at risk for vitamin D inadequacy and 8% are at risk of a true deficiency of Vitamin D. Source- Bloomberg Businessweek on 3/30/11.

What is Vitamin D and where do we get it?

Vitamin D is a fat soluble vitamin that is present in few foods naturally. It can be found in oysters, cod liver oil and the flesh of fatty fish like, salmon, tuna, and mackerel. There are also small amounts in beef liver, cheese and egg yolks. Now for those of you who (like me) aren't too into the flesh of salmon, there are fortified foods (meaning it is added to the food) like milk, cheese, butter, cream, margarine, and fortified cereals. Vitamin D is also made in our bodies naturally when we are exposed to sun. However, relying on sun for our source of vitamin D, is not a great idea despite the fact that there are claims that all you need is 15 minutes of sun 3x a week (outside and without sunscreen). Given the risks with skin cancer, it is not a recommended means of getting your vitamin D. Sources- NIH Dietary Supplement Fact Sheet- Vitamin-D, Medline Plus article 002405

What is Vitamin D used for?

Vitamin D aids in the absorption of calcium in the gut and helps to maintain levels of calcium and phosphate. It is an important part for bone growth and bone remodeling throughout life and without it kids can develop rickets and adults can develop osteoporosis (thinning of the bones). It also has roles in cell growth, neuromuscular and immune function, and serves as an anti-inflammatory. Sources- NIH Dietary Supplement Fact Sheet- Vitamin-D

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More on Vitamin D**It is possible that Vitamin D is helpful for the following-**

Cancer- There has been much said about Vitamin D's role at preventing colon and prostate cancer. While there are some studies to suggest this possibility, especially of its role in colon cancer prevention the data is not convincing. To date, there is no convincing evidence that Vitamin D prevents cancer and there is some evidence that high levels of vitamin D may increase risk of prostate and pancreatic cancer. Other possible benefits of vitamin D include; flu prevention, weight loss, muscle pain and weakness treatment (in particular back

What type of Vitamin D should I get?

There are 2 major types Vitamin D2 and Vitamin D3. From everything to date that we know they are essentially the same in their effectiveness. The only difference is that at higher doses of Vitamin D2 is considered less potent. Sources- NIH Dietary Supplement Fact Sheet- Vitamin-D

Who is at risk for developing Vitamin D deficiency?

1) People 60 and older as the skin becomes less and less efficient at making vitamin D and the older you get the less likely you are to spend time outside. 2) Breast fed infants (see below for information) 3) Dark skinned people as the dark skin reduces the ability of skin to make vitamin D. 4) People with fat malabsorption such as those with liver disease or Crohns disease. 5) Obesity (BMI >30) and gastric bypass (not lap band).

How much Vitamin D should I take daily?

The answer to this depends on who you talk to. Many are recommending mega doses for most anyone these days and I would caution anyone to follow such advice without checking levels and discussing it with us or your physician.

For infants the dose should be 400IU (international units) daily (if they are breastfed instead of formula) starting at an early age until they drink 1000ml a day of whole milk or vitamin D fortified formula. This is pretty standard across most major recommending boards and usually you can find it in drops called polyvisol.

For ages 1-70 the RDA (recommended daily allowance as set by the Institiue of medicine and it is what you may see on the back of many foods in their Nutritional information area) recommends

pain), and it may help with immune system support and infection prevention. Again, keep in mind these are only preliminary studies and the proof is not very reliable as of yet. Sources- NIH Dietary Supplement Fact Sheet- Vitamin-D, WebMD website on Vitamin-d.

The jury is still out as to whether Vitamin D may help the following conditions but there is some promise-

Diabetes mellitus, High blood pressure, high cholesterol, warts, heart disease, multiple sclerosis. However as previously mentioned, there is no good data to support the claims. Extending life in general, yes it has been proposed and initially thought to be true, but it is not clear if it is a wonder vitamin. Sorry but you'll have to wait for the next fountain of youth. If anything it appears as though Vitamin D does not prevent breast cancer and may even slightly increase the risk of breast cancer .Sources- NIH Dietary Supplement Fact Sheet- Vitamin-D, mayo clinic Website, WebMD

Should I just rely on supplements?

As is the case with most all supplements they should only be used when you are unable to reach levels in the diet. Does that mean you shouldn't

600IU daily and for age 70 and over they recommend 800IU.

Now many of the studies have been done with higher doses of Vitamin D and for Adults in general it appears that your daily vitamin D should be between 400IU- 1000IU- but it can vary up to 2000IU depending on the source and some studies showed benefit when the patients used up to 2000IU daily.

My take on this is not to stray much from the Institute of Medicine recommendations and take no more than 1000IU total (supplements and diet) and if you really want to push it 2000IU. Above that there isn't much data of extra benefit. Remember, at most the upper limits of safe currently appear to be 4000-5000IU daily but keep in mind that there is some data that medium to high levels of vitamin D may increase your risk of death (straightforward stuff isn't it). Sources- NIH Dietary Supplement Fact Sheet- Vitamin D, WebMD

What about screening for Vitamin D deficiency?

Unless you have a malabsorption issue or some of the potential risks we established above, there is no data to recommend regular checking of vitamin D. Furthermore, a local Rheumatology practice priced out the cost of a vitamin D test and it ranges from \$85 to \$232 to check your vitamin D- levels so unless you want to pay for it, (most insurances won't cover the cost even with some of the above conditions) just shoot for the recommended total daily levels of vitamin D- and you should be ok.

An interesting fact about vitamin D

Vitamin D by itself does not decrease the risk of fractures from falls. Remember that calcium is needed and it is the vitamin D that helps its absorption into the body. Sources- NIH Dietary Supplement Fact Sheet- Vitamin-D

consider 1000-2000IU total of vitamin D. To date, this seems like a reasonable amount for most anyone other than those with significant vitamin D deficiencies but always best to seek vitamin D in food sources- enjoy your salmon!!!

What medications can interact with vitamin D?

These things may be affected by vitamin D and you may want to discuss with your doctor- Digoxin (may increase effects), Dovonex (don't take vitamin D with this), Aluminum (take antacids 2 hours before or after vitamin D), Diltiazem (may decrease effect of diltiazem), Verapamil (stay on low dose vitamin D), Diuretics (could increase calcium in the body), Tagamet (may make vitamin D less effective). Sources- WebMD

Upcoming supplements we will highlight- We want your input!!!

In the coming months I would like to highlight several different supplements that are out on the market and examine their benefits and potential risks. Next month we will talk about Vit calcium - they are not just for women any more. By all means if you have one supplement in particular that you are curious about let us know and we will try to provide you with some

What are some of the things Vitamin D can help prevent?

Osteoporosis and fall prevention both have evidence to suggest they both are positively affected by vitamin D. Also it can prevent some of the bone loss associated with chronic prednisone. There are many other conditions it can treat such as rickets, hypocalcemia due to hypoparathyroidism, several conditions causing hypophosphatemia, psoriasis, and hyperparathyroidism. Sources- Mayo Clinic website, WebMD website on Vitamin-d.

What can happen if too much Vitamin D is taken?

You can develop symptoms such as rapid heart beat, palpitations, kidney stones, vomiting, urinary frequency, weight loss, and anorexia (loss of appetite). In fact, it can even increase risk of pancreatic cancer, heart attack, and oddly increase the risk of falls and fractures. One study by Melamed showed an increased risk of death with high as well as low vitamin D- levels which again reminds you to be careful and not take too much vitamin-D. Sources- NIH Dietary Supplement Fact Sheet- Vitamin-D, Medline Plus article 002405. Melamed ML et al. Arch Intern medication. 2009; 169 1075-6.

Saturday appointments help keep some out of the emergency room or urgent care!

We want to thank you for using Saturday appointments. We have tried to accommodate people who call on the same day or those who are scheduling online up to 1 hour before the appointment time. While we can't guarantee same day appointments like on weekdays, we will do our best to accommodate you.

information about the supplement either via email, on facebook, or in our newsletter. We hope you don't feel as though your opinion doesn't count in your own care- it is the most important factor and if you don't believe what we think then the chances are you won't do it anyway. So please use us to advance your information about your health but ultimately the choice is always yours. Thanks again for your trust.

Online scheduling and same day appointments are great benefits at Northside Family Medicine.

Many of our patients are already taking advantage of online scheduling. If you forget to call during office hours or run into a problem in the middle of the night and want to make sure you get an appointment the next day you can schedule it online. Even if an appointment isn't available online just call us after 830AM and before 3PM on a normal business day during the week and we'll get you in that day. Any time of the day just go to our website www.northsidefammed.com and follow the easy instructions to schedule online any time.

More newsletters are on the way you can access old newsletters on our website!

This is our Tenth newsletter and we are trying to touch on important topics for lots of our patients. You can go to www.northsidefammed.com and on the "News from Northside Family Medicine" tab. There you will find the other newsletters there to catch up on. Please let us know if you have other thoughts or things you would like to include in future newsletters especially if you have ideas about a supplement or another topic to address. We'd love to hear from you!

The greatest compliment you could ever give us is the referral of your family and friends. We thank you for your trust. Northside Family Medicine

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from ac- up to 4/15/10 last 18 months



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