



# Holistic Medical Centre

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## Vitamin D

We have mentioned Vitamin D in previous newsletters in relation to many aspects of health and wellbeing. It is now time to devote a newsletter to this amazing vitamin. Vitamin D could be classed as a hormone as it behaves like a hormone in the body. The normal reference range in New Zealand for vitamin D is 50-150nmol/L on a blood test. Traditionally vitamin D is viewed only in terms of bone health as low vitamin increases the risk of osteoporosis. This is because adequate vitamin D is required to absorb calcium from the digestive tract. Whether 50nmol/L of vitamin D is enough for good bone health is debatable, however, it is certainly not good enough to maintain other aspects of health and wellbeing. Our aim is to maintain healthy vitamin D levels at 100nmol/L. There are very few exceptions to this. The most notable improvements in wellbeing from patients are better sleep, better mood and cessation of dull aches and pains that feel as if they are in the bones. The improvement in

the body aches may be related to calcium metabolism but the mechanism is unknown. The improvement in sleep and mood appears to be via an improvement in melatonin and serotonin levels. Melatonin is a hormone that regulates normal sleep and can improve the quality of sleep as many of our patients can attest to. If you are waking at night or sleep very lightly melatonin may help this, however it is a good idea to optimise your vitamin D levels first. Some studies also indicate that melatonin may lower the risk of some types of cancers and reduce some of the side effects associated with chemotherapy and radiotherapy. Another trial is planned to investigate whether melatonin can assist with cancer related weight loss. There is good evidence to suggest that vitamin D itself may lower the risk of colon, breast, prostate, and ovarian cancer. Many women have commented that their heavy periods have resolved

after correcting vitamin D levels. An increase in calcium uptake in the diet after correcting vitamin D is a likely reason as calcium (along with vitamin K) is needed for proper clotting in the blood. Some people find that achieving adequate vitamin D levels assists with chronic headaches and others find that muscle and joint stiffness is a little better. It is unknown if this is due to the hormonal actions or nutritional actions of vitamin D but we do look forward to more studies to enlighten us. The effect on quality of life that can be achieved with this vitamin cannot be overstated from our view, particularly in the winter months with those suffering from low mood and disrupted sleep. Another newly emerging benefit of vitamin D is its ability to assist in the maintenance of healthy blood sugar levels. It appears to play a role in reducing elevated insulin levels which lowers the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes.

## Our favourite quote

I am a firm believer in the people. If given the truth, they can be depended upon to meet any national crisis. The great point is to bring them the real facts. Abraham Lincoln 1809-1865

## Health tips

For those with fussy teens who like meat but refuse vegetables, try the following recipe. In a pan sauté onion, lots of garlic, chopped potato, kumara, pumpkin, brussels sprouts, capsicum and carrot. Add salt, lots of ground pepper and dried mixed herbs. Sauté all then mix a cube of stock (preferably Rapunzel) with a small amount of hot water and add to veges. Cook till water is absorbed and veges are soft. Mix with 2 beaten eggs and mince. Cover and bake in a glass loaf tin for 1-1.5 hours at 180°C. Remove cover for last 10 minutes to brown the top. Serve with mustard or sauce. Will often be eaten for school lunch the next day without complaint.

## Happy Patient File

A lovely 35 year old man came to us recently feeling a bit down with some anxiety and irritability which was adversely affecting his relationship and interfering with his studies. He found that just some B vitamins and magnesium has had a wonderful effect. He was happy to report that he feels relaxed and calm, his mood had improved such that he was able to enjoy his relationship. He was also eating better, exercising and doing better with his studies.

## More information and recipes

A light nutritious meal is roast vegetable salad with marinated feta or avocado (as a dairy-free option). Roast pieces of potato, kumara, pumpkin and sliced carrot in olive oil and salt. Ten minutes before the end of cooking add halved Brussels sprouts, sliced courgette, sliced red and green capsicum and coat with

olive oil. To serve toss with crumbled feta or avocado and baby spinach (or fresh chopped coriander) and toss with the dressing below. In a jar, mix olive oil, balsamic vinegar, a little pomegranate molasses, salt, pepper and dried basil. Shake well and toss through your salad. Eat alone or along-

side your protein of choice. Pomegranate molasses is available at some New World supermarkets and specialty food stores, lasts a long time and is well worth getting. Article thirteen from the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. Article XIII  
(1) Everyone has the right to

*freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.*

*(2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own and to return to his country.*