



The D-Health Trial Newsletter

D-Health Trial results

Thank you for your patience while we prepare our results for publication. We are pleased to be able to let you know that we have published our findings regarding the effect of vitamin D on falling (see below). We have completed our analyses of the effect of vitamin D on:

- mortality (death) rate;
- antibiotic use;
- hospitalisation for infection;
- erectile dysfunction;
- pain; and
- nonmelanoma skin cancer.

We have submitted the 'mortality' manuscript for publication and all other manuscripts will be submitted after this main manuscript is accepted by the journal. We will let you know the results of these analyses when the peer-review process is complete and the manuscripts are 'in press'.



The effect of vitamin D on falling

Each year we asked you if you had experienced a fall in the month prior to completing your annual survey. We also asked 2,615 participants to keep a 'Falls Diary' for three months so we could capture details about any falls that occurred during that period.

Across all participants, the percent of falls was very slightly higher in the vitamin D group compared with the placebo group (Table 1), but this difference was not statistically significant. That is, this small difference may be just a chance finding.

(continued overleaf)

Table 1: Percent of falls in annual surveys and diaries: all participants

	Vitamin D	Placebo
Fall in the previous month in annual surveys	6.0%	5.8%
Any fall reported in the falls diary over 3 months	15.2%	14.6%



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We observed some interesting findings when we split participants up into different groups.

Body mass index: We found that in people who had a normal body mass index when they joined the D-Health Trial, taking vitamin D resulted in a small statistically significant increase in the risk of falling (see Table 2).

Vitamin D status: In people predicted to have low vitamin D status (vitamin D < 50 nmol/L) when they began the trial, taking vitamin D supplements offered some protection against falling. In those predicted to have normal vitamin D, the percent that fell was slightly higher in the vitamin D than in the placebo group (see Table 2).

What do these results mean for you?

The differences in falls between the vitamin D and placebo groups were small. However, if you are normal body weight or have a normal vitamin D level, we would not recommend that you take a large monthly dose of vitamin D, just to be on the safe side.

Table 2: Percent of falls in annual surveys, in subgroups of participants

Participant subgroup	Vitamin D	Placebo
Normal body mass index	6.2%	5.0%
Overweight or obese	5.9%	6.2%
Low vitamin D status	6.0%	6.8%
Normal vitamin D status	6.0%	5.6%



NEWS ABOUT A NEW STUDY: THE SUN-D TRIAL

Have you ever wondered if putting on sunscreen with a high SPF value will stop you from making vitamin D?

Sunscreen blocks the ultraviolet wavelengths in sunlight that cause sunburns and skin cancer. However these wavelengths are also responsible for producing vitamin D in the skin. The Cancer Council advises that on all days when the ultraviolet index is forecast to reach 3 (even if only for a small part of the day) people should put on sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30+.

We do not know if this will cause people to become vitamin D deficient. The Sun-D Trial is going to find out the answer to this question. In April 2022, we will be recruiting people aged 30 to 65 years who live in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, or Tasmania and who do not routinely use sunscreen. We will give half the participants sunscreen and ask them to apply it every day for one year. The other half will continue their usual behaviour. We will measure vitamin D levels in both groups three times over the year.

You are not eligible (because you are all over 65). **However, we would be hugely grateful if you could ask your younger friends and family to consider taking part in the Sun-D Trial.** If they are interested they can join our Sun-D mailing list by scanning the QR code, or going to: <https://redcap.qimrberghofer.edu.au/surveys/> and entering the survey access code **AK7E8843Y**. They can also call or email us. We will be in touch when we are ready to begin recruiting. For more information, visit the Sun-D website www.qimrberghofer.edu.au/sund/



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