



Press release

Save €177 billion throughout Europe with vitamin D

Veldhoven, 2nd April 2009 (SRF) – Sufficient provision of the population with vitamin D would lower the health costs in 17 European countries by an unbelievable €187 billion - with only €10 billion of additional costs. This corresponds to a saving of 17.7% in the health budgets of these countries. This result comes from a study by American, Norwegian, Austrian and German scientists, who have built up a reputation internationally in vitamin D research. According to the study the most positive health effects of sufficient vitamin D provision would primarily occur with widespread diseases such as cancer, cardio vascular diseases, diabetes, osteoporosis, air way inflammations and in the dental sector.

„Our investigation results should be seen as a wake up call to the health authorities and politicians, to familiarise themselves with the positive health effects of vitamin D“, emphasises William B. Grant, under whose direction the study was compiled. Adequate provision with vitamin D, continues Grant, is a low cost way to prevent diseases and – a circumstance which many people will accommodate – additionally requires no change to lifestyle and eating habits.

According to the research group, the calculations are based exclusively on the most recent scientific knowledge about the effects of the „sunshine vitamin“ from the past years. It is widely accepted by the medical and scientific community that man is “designed” in such a way that he should receive minimally 80% of the vitamin D he requires for optimal health via the skin, that is from the sun or a sunbed. To get the same amount via diet only, one would need to eat a mackerel or salmon twice a day according to Professor Heike Bischoff-Ferrari of the University of Zurich. The initial question for the study has been: “What direct and indirect health effects would an increase of the average vitamin D level in the blood of the European citizens to the optimum level of 40 ng/mL (nanograms per millilitre) have, what would it cost and what savings would it mean for the health systems of those countries?” The study is based on the data from a total of 17 North, West and Southern European states, including Denmark, Finland, Great Britain, Austria, France, Germany and Italy.

The Sunlight Research Forum (SRF) is a non profit organisation with the HQ in the Netherlands. It is their goal to make the newest medical and scientific knowledge about the effects of moderate UV radiation on people available to the general public.

Remarks:

- The study „Grant, William B et al.: Estimated benefit of increased vitamin D status in reducing the economic burden of disease in Western Europe“ is available on the SRF website www.sunlightresearchforum.nl to download.

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