



Vitamin D Supplementation in MS
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At the time that I started doing work on vitamin D, we knew that it was a risk factor for developing MS. But it wasn't clear if it was important for folks who already had the disease. So, what we've been able to show over the last few years is that in fact people with MS who have lower levels of vitamin D do seem to have more attacks, more new white spots show up on the MRI scan, and more loss of brain tissue.

So, sometimes when we think we understand a cause and effect we don't really have the full picture. What if vitamin D is actually harmful though? It's really a hormone - a steroid hormone, and it affects a lot of processes in the body. So it's definitely possible that it could be doing something exactly the opposite of what we think.

So we're in the middle of enrolling in a large study sponsored by the National MS Society. We'll take a look at the data and see if the people who got higher levels of vitamin D supplementation had fewer MS outcomes that we don't like, such as relapses and new the spots on MRI, compare to those who got the recommended daily allowance of the vitamin D.

That's why we think it's really important before we just give a blank recommendation to take vitamin D supplements to make sure that it's doing what we think it should be doing.