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## Vitamin D Supplements Prevent Heart Disease- And The Sun is Good

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Vitamin D supplements may help to reduce the risk of heart disease. Researchers found that women over age 65 who took the supplements had nearly one-third less risk of dying from heart disease. Low levels of certain forms of vitamin D have been associated with increased risk of heart attacks. But the positive impact of taking vitamin D supplements has not been previously examined. Vitamin D and calcium are part of the standard therapy for the bone-thinning disease osteoporosis.

A team from the University of California at San Francisco studied 9,704 women aged 65 and older. Of these, 4,272 were taking vitamin D supplements.

Women who used vitamin D supplements had a 31 percent lower risk of heart disease death than those who did not take the supplements.

Vitamin D is one of the most important regulators of calcium absorption in the body.

Atherosclerosis, the accumulation of cholesterol and fat in the walls of arteries, is often associated with calcification, the build up of the mineral calcium in the arteries.

It is thought that low levels of vitamin D in the blood are associated with an acceleration of this build up.

Women with osteoporosis - which is caused by loss of calcium from the bones - are more likely to die of CHD than women without the disease.

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