

Task Force Issues Final Recommendation Statement on Screening for Vitamin D Deficiency in Adults

More research is needed to make a recommendation for or against screening

WASHINGTON, D.C. – April 13, 2021 – The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (Task Force) today published a final recommendation statement on screening for vitamin D deficiency in adults. The Task Force determined there is not enough evidence to recommend for or against screening for vitamin D deficiency in adults without signs or symptoms. **This is an I statement.**

Grade in this recommendation:

I: The balance of benefits and harms cannot be determined.

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Vitamin D is naturally found in some foods, can be made by a person's body when exposed to the sun, and can be taken through supplements. If a person is vitamin D deficient, it means their level of vitamin D in the blood is too low, which can lead to health issues. However, the ideal level of vitamin D varies from person to person, so there is no single level of vitamin D that is considered too low for everyone.

“We know that vitamin D is an important nutrient for keeping bones healthy and may also have a role in other aspects of good health,” says Task Force member Michael Silverstein, M.D., M.P.H. “However, we need more research on what level of vitamin D people need to stay healthy before we can make a recommendation for or against screening.”

It is important to note that this final recommendation does not apply to people who already have health conditions where vitamin D supplementation is required. People who are concerned about their level of vitamin D should talk with their clinician about their individual health needs.

“Before we can know if screening for vitamin D deficiency helps prevent negative health outcomes such as falls, cancer, or heart problems, we need to understand the level of vitamin D that is too low,” says Task Force member John Wong, M.D. “Once the ideal level of vitamin D is identified, then research on whether screening for vitamin D deficiency can improve health outcomes will be helpful.”

The Task Force's final recommendation statement and corresponding evidence summary have been published online in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, as well as on the Task Force website at www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org. A draft version of the recommendation statement and evidence review were available for public comment from September 22, 2020, to October 19, 2020.

The Task Force is an independent, volunteer panel of national experts in prevention and evidence-based medicine that works to improve the health of all Americans by making evidence-based recommendations about clinical preventive services such as screenings, counseling services, and preventive medications.

Dr. Silverstein is a professor of pediatrics, chief of the Division of General Academic Pediatrics, and vice chair of research for the Department of Pediatrics at the Boston University School of Medicine. He is also associate chief medical officer for research and population health at Boston Medical Center/Boston University School of Medicine.

Dr. Wong is chief scientific officer, vice chair for Clinical Affairs, chief of the Division of Clinical Decision Making, and a primary care clinician in the Department of Medicine at Tufts Medical Center. He is also director of comparative effectiveness research for the Tufts Clinical Translational Science Institute and

a professor of medicine at Tufts University School of Medicine and the Tufts University School of Graduate Biomedical Sciences.

Contact: USPSTF Media Coordinator at Newsroom@USPSTF.net / (301) 951-9203