

Why Vitamin D??

Laugh off Flu Season with this Essential Vitamin. Getting plenty of this vitamin may strengthen your immune system and make venturing out of your house a little less scary this flu season. We're talking about the sunshine vitamin -- good old D. In a study done during flu season, people who had higher blood levels of vitamin D were half as likely to get hit with the bug -- or any other viral infection of the respiratory tract, for that matter.

"D" Is for Defense Not only were the D lovers in the study less likely to get sick compared with people who had lower D levels, but the high-D group also tended to be out of commission for fewer days when they did get hit. Of course, washing your hands frequently and living a healthy lifestyle are still the cornerstones of flu avoidance. But it's nice to know that a D supplement could act as positive reinforcement. Researchers aren't totally sure why D helps, but it could be that this immune system vitamin's inflammation-suppressing powers help reduce the severity of infections. Another good defense against flu? Getting vaccinated. Should Your Baby Get a Flu Shot? "Because influenza is so common and affects young children so severely (20,000 U.S. children under age 5 are hospitalized with complications of the flu each year), the recommendation of yearly flu shots beginning at 6 months of age is not unreasonable," "One of the reasons you don't want your baby to catch the flu is that antiviral medications such as Tamiflu (oseltamivir) are either contraindicated due to side effects in those under 1 year of age or have not been tested for safety in that population, and flu is a more serious disease for those not yet in first grade."

RealAge Benefits Getting 400 international units of vitamin D and 1,200 milligrams of calcium per day can make your RealAge as much as 1.3 years younger. **Cold and Flu Follow** The cold and the flu are both common illnesses. You can tell the difference by how fast to comes on. Flu also tends to have a higher fever in adults. Both can cause sore throat, cough, stuffy head and will make you feel miserable. Both are caused by viruses, and have no cure - get better when your body makes you better. As flu can be more serious, doctors may prescribe an antiviral medication. Unlike the common cold, it is possible to prevent some flu or to reduce its severity by getting an immunization for current flu.