
Press Release

January 25, 2008

Contact Kellie Cowan 202 367 1142

February is Vitamin D Deficiency Month

In recent years, several dubious groups have launched smear campaigns against the sun and tanning, blurring the line between overexposure—a very real threat to our health—and *any* exposure at all. The sunscreen industry constantly warns the public to “cover up” before venturing outside. Store shelves are flooded with products promising increasingly higher sun protecting factors (SPF). And the latest children’s swim trunks cover more skin than a nun’s habit.

As a result, the Centers for Disease Control estimates that more than 180 million Americans—60 percent of the population—are not getting enough Vitamin D.

The National Institute of Health lists sunlight as “the most important source of vitamin D.” Our bodies produce the aptly named “sunshine vitamin” when ultraviolet (UV) rays reach our skin. In order to produce the amount that most experts now agree is the minimum daily requirement (about 1,000 to 2,000 international units), some individuals would need to bare it all for about 20 minutes in the sunshine every day. Most of America doesn’t even come close.

Without Vitamin D, our bodies cannot build strong bones or maintain a healthy immune system. New research indicates that the sunshine vitamin plays a vital role in the prevention of many deadly illnesses, including multiple sclerosis, tuberculosis, schizophrenia, and heart disease. Health officials estimate that as many as 47,000 cancer deaths could be prevented each year in America if adequate vitamin D levels were attained.

Vitamin D deficiency is contributing to hundreds of thousands of cases of chronic and terminal diseases. That means the sunlight myths perpetuated by the skin care industry aren’t only misleading. They’re deadly.

The public is largely unaware that spending 5-7 minutes in a sunbed a few times a week provides people with the necessary amount of Vitamin D to stay healthy. In fact, most people aren’t even aware that they could be at risk of Vitamin D deficiency.

That’s why the ITA has declared February Vitamin D Deficiency Month. Help us celebrate by telling your customers about the importance of getting enough Vitamin D and encourage them to share the information with friends and family. While current customers enjoy sunbathing because it makes them look and feel good, there is a potential market to be tapped into by letting people know that your salon is an optimal place to get their much needed Vitamin D. It also gives your current customers another good reason to keep coming back!