

## Vitamin A overdose leads to fractures

Such was the heading of a recently released news article highlighting the results of a study published in the January 23 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*. The summary article by Swedish researchers states that, “Middle-aged men with high levels of vitamin A in their blood are more likely to break a bone in later years than those with lower levels of the vitamin.”

The study followed over 2000 men aged from 49 to 51 at the start of the study, and tracked their health for the following 30 years. Men with the highest blood levels of vitamin A were most likely to experience broken bones. The study also referenced other studies that examined the relation between excessive dietary intake of vitamin A and decreased bone mineral density. Other studies have produced data to show that a regular intake of too much vitamin A is known to affect bone metabolism.

The Dietary Reference Intakes (DRI) for vitamin A are 700 mcg/day for females, and 900 mcg/day for males ages 14 and up. The government has also set 3000 mcg as a Safe Upper Limit. The study mentioned in this article and others have shown that dietary intake of vitamin A (retinal) that exceeds 3000 mg/day is associated with a significantly higher risk of hip fracture compared to those whose intake is less than 1200 mcg per day.

The research team concluded: “Our findings suggest that current levels of vitamin A supplementation and food fortification in many western countries may need to be reassessed.”

If you are supplementing your dietary intake with a multivitamin-mineral product you may want to check the dosage amount of vitamin A to ensure that your total intake between your food and supplement does not exceed the safe upper limit established by the government.

Submitted By Lynn Perkes  
Wellness Committee