FACTORS RELATED TO AUTOIMMUNE DISEASE PREVELANCE, SUNLIGHT EXPOSURE AND VITAMIN D INTAKE
Jodi Denise Kimbell

Abstract

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study was to assess if one source of vitamin D is superior to another in relationship to incidence of autoimmune disease. We have known for years now that vitamin D is essential for bone health. More recently however, new evidence being published that vitamin D is required to maintain many other physiological functions in the human body. It seems the immune system is one of those physiological systems that vitamin D plays an essential role in (Miller, 2010). New studies suggest that adequate amounts of vitamin D may reduce the risk of autoimmune disease (Mahan, 2004). There are multiple sources of vitamin D. Some of those include sunlight, fatty fish, eggs, fortified milk and orange juice. In addition to food and sunlight, vitamin D is also available in supplement form. **Methods:** Participants of the study were members of autoimmune support groups, employees of gardening companies or land surveyors. The purpose of choosing these participants was to get a variety of people who get regular sun exposure or have an autoimmune disease diagnosis. **Results** of the study indicated that those who get more sun exposure are less likely to have an autoimmune disease diagnosis. **Conclusions:** Those who take vitamin D supplements and drink orange juice are more likely to have an autoimmune disease diagnosis. The sample size was small and cannot be generalized.