



Original article

EMAS position statement: Vitamin D and menopausal health

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: There is increasing evidence that vitamin D has widespread tissue effects. In addition to osteoporosis, vitamin D deficiency has been associated with cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, infections and neurodegenerative disease. However, the effect of vitamin D supplementation on non-skeletal outcomes requires clarification, especially in postmenopausal women.

Aim: This position statement provides an evidence-based overview of the role of vitamin D in the health of postmenopausal women based on observational and interventional studies.

Materials and methods: Literature review and consensus of expert opinion.

Results and conclusions: Vitamin D status is determined by measuring serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D levels. Concentrations <20 ng/ml (<50 nmol/l) and <10 ng/ml (<25 nmol/l) are considered to constitute vitamin D deficiency and severe deficiency, respectively. Observational data suggest an association between vitamin D deficiency and adverse health outcomes in postmenopausal women, although they cannot establish causality. The evidence from randomized controlled trials concerning vitamin D supplementation is not robust, since many studies did not consider whether people were deficient at baseline. Moreover, high heterogeneity exists in terms of the population studied, vitamin D dosage, calcium co-administration and duration of intervention.

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