



Healthy Her

The Benefits of Vitamin D (continued)

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Last month, I discussed the many heart health benefits of Vitamin D. These included:

1. Heart Health
2. Immune Health
3. Bone Health
4. Vascular Health
5. Cholesterol Health

But the benefits even go beyond that to include respiratory system protection from bacteria and viruses. In fact, those with higher Vitamin D levels have a lower risk of developing and contracting respiratory viruses and a lower risk of hospitalizations.

But did you know that Black women are more likely to be Vitamin D deficient than white women? The reason for this is the melanin content in our skin.

You see, melanin acts as a UV filter for sunlight, serving as a natural protector from the harmful rays of the sun. It is one of the reasons that darker skin does not age as fast as lighter skin tones. But it also means that Vitamin D levels are impacted.

This is because the body makes its own Vitamin D by converting sunlight absorbed by the skin. Since darker skins filter sunlight, there is lower production of Vitamin D inside the body.

Vitamin D deficiency is associated with stiffened arteries, and therefore higher blood pressure (which is a big risk factor for heart disease). It is also associated with insulin resistance. And those with lower Vitamin D levels have a higher risk of pregnancy complications such as preeclampsia, gestational diabetes, high blood pressure of pregnancy, and low birth weight babies. All of these are associated with a higher risk of heart disease later in life.

So, if you are prescribed Vitamin D by your doctor, please take it. And for Black women, you may need as high as 4000IU per day to replace your Vitamin D stores and maintain normal levels.

Click on my Stairwell Chronicles episode below for a quick recap:

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DTNobn4kSKT/?igsh=MWFhYWE2emtneXFrbw==>

Once again, I want to reinforce the importance of taking Vitamin D supplements if you have been told that your levels are low. It's good for many aspects of your health, but especially your heart.

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