

U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Issues Draft Recommendation Statement on Vitamin D Deficiency Screening

Task Force finds evidence insufficient to recommend for or against screening all adults

WASHINGTON, D.C. – June 24, 2014 –The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (Task Force) today posted a draft recommendation statement and draft evidence review on screening for vitamin D deficiency in adults. The Task Force concluded that there is not enough evidence to recommend for or against screening all adults for vitamin D deficiency. This is an I statement. The Task Force is providing an opportunity for public comment on this draft recommendation statement and draft evidence review until July 21. All comments will be considered as the Task Force develops its final recommendation and final evidence summary.

“While there is a lot of interest in how vitamin D impacts health, we don’t have enough evidence at this time to know whether screening the general adult population for vitamin D deficiency improves health,” says Task Force member Linda Baumann, Ph.D., R.N. “There is still scientific debate about what blood level of vitamin D is optimal and what level is considered deficient.”

This draft recommendation is for generally healthy adults, not people who show signs or symptoms of vitamin D deficiency. Vitamin D is an important nutrient for keeping bones healthy and may also have a role in other aspects of health. Vitamin D levels can become too low if an individual doesn’t eat enough vitamin D–rich foods, has very little exposure to sunlight, or has health conditions that prevent the body from absorbing or using vitamin D.

“People who are concerned about their vitamin D levels should talk with their doctor about screening or supplementation based on their individual health needs,” says Task Force co-vice chair Albert L. Siu, M.D., M.S.P.H.

The Task Force’s draft recommendation statement and draft evidence review have been posted for public comment on the Task Force Web site at www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org. Comments can be submitted from June 24 to July 21 at www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/tfcomment.htm. A fact sheet that explains the draft recommendation statement in plain language is also available.

The Task Force is an independent, volunteer panel of national experts in prevention and evidence-based medicine that works to improve the health of all Americans by making evidence-based recommendations about clinical preventive services such as screenings, counseling services, and preventive medications.

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