



Press release

Reduced mortality rate through increased vitamin D levels

Veldhoven, 13 November 2009 (SRF) – The health benefits of a regular dose of sunshine in a controlled manner exceeds its possible risks many times over. With regard to the US population, those with an increase in average vitamin D levels in the blood to 45 nanograms per millilitre (45 ng/ml) linked to around double UV exposition would lead to an increase in skin cancer and deaths by up to 12,000 on the one hand. On the other hand, the mortality rate fell for many common diseases, in particular cancer and cardiovascular diseases by approximately 400,000 cases. William B. Grant, one of the worldwide renowned experts in the field of vitamin D research, comes to this result in a study currently published in the journal “Dermato-Endocrinology”. In light of the results of his investigation, Grant comes to the conclusion that the healthcare recommendation to avoid UV rays from the sun or from sunbeds may be counter productive.

“Health policy recommendations should find an equal balance between adequate exposure to sunshine outdoors or using a sunbed for a uniform supply of vitamin D on the one hand and to avoid skin damage by using adequate sun protection on the other“, explained Ad Brand from the Sunlight Research Forum (SRF).

In his investigation, William B. Grant determines the positive and negative impact of an increased vitamin D supply through UV rays from the sun or sunbed in a detailed model calculation based on previous research regarding the effects of vitamin D deficiency on mortality risk and the risk of contracting disease. Based on research, an average vitamin D level of 40 to 60 nanograms per millilitre of blood (40-60 ng/ml) is considered the level from which vitamin D can optimally produce positive effects.

The Sunlight Research Forum (SRF) is a non-profit organisation headquartered in the Netherlands. Its aim is to make the latest medical and scientific knowledge about the effects of moderate exposure to UV rays available to the general public.

Information:

A summary of the report “William B. Grant: In defense of the sun - an estimate of changes in mortality rates in the United States if mean serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D levels were raised to 45 ng/mL by solar ultraviolet-B irradiance; in: Dermato-Endocrinology 1:4, 207-214; July/August 2009” can be downloaded from the SRF website www.sunlightresearchforum.eu

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