

## Low Vitamin D Levels Linked To High Prostate Cancer Risk

Men at risk of prostate cancer are more likely to develop an aggressive form of the disease if they are vitamin D deficient, reveals a study published in *Clinical Cancer Research*.\*

Study author Rick Kittles, Department of Medicine, University of Illinois at Chicago, says that while 25-hydroxyvitamin D is known to impact the growth of both benign and malignant prostate cells, this is the first study to link vitamin D deficiency and biopsy outcomes in high-risk men.

Researchers examined data from 667 men aged 40 through 79 who had elevated PSA levels or other risk factors for prostate cancer. The men were also screened for vitamin D levels.

Normal vitamin D levels are in the range of **30 to 80 ng/mL**. Levels under **20 ng/mL** were typical among all men tested.

About **44%** of men with positive biopsies had low vitamin D levels. Among the men who tested positive for cancer after a biopsy, those with very low vitamin levels—under **12 ng/mL**—had greater odds of more advanced and aggressive cancers than those with normal levels. And the lower the vitamin D level, the higher the risk.

**Editor's Note:** "Vitamin D deficiency could be a biomarker of advanced prostate tumor progression in large segments of the general population," said lead author Dr. Adam B. Murphy, of Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine.

"More research is needed, but it would be wise for men to be screened for vitamin D deficiency and treated."

—A. Kessler

Reference

\* *Clin Cancer Res.* 2014, May 1;20: 2289-99.