



hanover healthfoods

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Did You Know?

Hanover Fact Number 234730...

Hanover Healthfoods was established in 1904.

Previously at 40 Hanover Street was Mrs Jack, a purveyor of haggis, beef and ham.

In 1904 Mrs Bertram established her 'Health Goods Depot' here. Before the Great War it passed to Edwin Rodbourn, a non-conformist from Bristol, who went on to have health stores in Bruntsfield and London Street. Ten years later it changed hands again to a Mr Burnett, and in 1933 Robert Ainslie finally took over the shop and it has been in the Ainslie family ever since.



VITAMIN D: Expert Views



Most cells in the body have receptors for D3. This is an indicator as to how important its role is. D3 has been found to be important for how 2000 of our genes function. The implications of low D3 are significant and likely to grow as we understand more.

Classic D3 deficiency, rickets, is on the rise and so is its adult version, osteomalacia. The symptoms are bone pain, backache, and muscle weakness. One of the speakers at the Forum was a gastroenterologist who now tests all of his patients for D3. Of those presenting with inflammatory bowel conditions a very high proportion are chronically low in D3 and respond well to supplementation.

Some of the mechanisms are well understood but much research still needs to be done before doctors start to fully accept the role of D3. An example is Multiple Sclerosis. Scots have the highest rate of MS in the world and there is an association between low D3 levels and relapse. We also know that D3 interacts with the gene linked to MS, but cause and effect have not been totally established. The same is true of cancer. A powerful analysis completed at the University of California in 2008 shows a very, very strong link between the higher levels of blood D3 and lower incidence of breast cancer. Statistically it doesn't get any better but it will take time before the mechanisms emerge.

The best way to keep an eye on your D3 levels is by a blood test – specifically a 25(OH)D test. You may be able to persuade your doctor to do one. Failing that we now sell test kits for £70. It is likely that the units will be nanomoles per litre (nmol/l). The experts believe that ideally your levels should be maintained around 100-150nmol/l. Below 50nmol/l is considered deficient.

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You might have thought that as we move into spring that Vitamin D would slowly slide into the shadows. With everything that we now know this is going to be unlikely.

Last month I attended an Experts Forum on Vitamin D. Speakers included Michael Holick, Professor of Medicine at Boston University and Reinhold Vieth, Professor of Nutritional Science and Laboratory Medicine, University of Toronto. The amount of understanding that they already have about Vitamin D is quite incredible and I aim to give a taster of why it is of crucial importance to you, right now.

The problem with Scotland and D3 is simple - the amount of solar radiation this far north is too low. We get 300 sunshine hours a year less than even London. The climate is colder so you have to wrap up. A simple formula is that if you can see your shadow and it is the same length, or shorter, than you then you can make D3. If you can't see your shadow, perhaps due to cloud cover, then it just can't happen.

You are at extra risk if you use suncreams and cosmetics with SPF. If you are obese you need 2-3 times more as it is stored in fat cells with less positive effects. If you are vegan, food sources of D3 are likely to be limited.

DEFINING: Hayfever

The runny noses and itchy eyes have started already! Spring has sprung and, as delighted as we all are to have the lighter evenings, not all of us can leap into the countryside without suffering some consequences.

Hayfever is the term given to seasonal allergic rhinitis brought on as pollens from trees, grasses and weeds appear. Symptoms include sneezing, post-nasal drip, and/or fatigue. Although avoiding allergens is not always possible, help is at hand to reduce histamine production, the substance our immune systems release and that produces all the symptoms.

Firstly, detoxing the body of accumulations of muck is very helpful. This will reduce the immune system's load - helpful because histamine is produced when the body has too much inflammation going on. Itchy skin is another example of when it's time to cleanse. Basically, hayfever is a sign that all is not well in the body and that the immune system can't handle what many others easily do. Try to reduce inflammation causing foods; meat, dairy, alcohol, sugar, caffeine and gluten.

Allergic rhinitis (inflammation of the nasal passages) is related to immune system development and is less common in those who went to nursery, come from a large family, did not receive antibiotics in childhood, or were exposed to common community infections. We are living in sanitised environments, sloshing disinfectants around when what we need to do is spend our childhood getting dirty. Farm children have some of the best immune systems out there!

Alternative remedies work and don't cause drowsiness or interact with alcohol consumption. But they don't eliminate the need to reduce the body's toxic load and follow an holistic



treatment. The herbal remedy Luffa works best if you can start using it before your particular allergen comes into force and as it helps to calm down the immune system response. It is also useful for allergic rhinitis caused by house dust mites, animal hair, traffic fumes or plant moulds.

Pycnogenol, which comes from French maritime pine bark trees, is a rich source of plant flavonoids (OPCs). It has been shown to be useful for hayfever. Weleda's Rhinodoron nasal spray contains water and soothing aloe vera and is safe for children from the age of 3 months and throughout pregnancy.

Butterbur (Petasites) is an anti-spasmodic and anti-inflammatory herb that helps to prevent chemicals binding to histamine receptors. Try 50mg 2-3 times a day and use before the hayfever season as a preventative. Butterbur was tested alongside the steroid based drug cetirizine, and worked just as well.

Candy, Diploma in Nutritional Healing

VITAMIN D



Many of the presentations from the Expert Forum of the Vitamin D Association are now online at www.vitaminassociation.org. There will be audio and video recordings of the proceedings in due course.

If you wish to participate in an international study of Vitamin D, and get your levels tested every 6 months privately, then visit www.grassroothealth.net. This website is run by several researchers from the University of California.

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The results of 5000 D3 tests done in a London hospital showed an average of 40nmol/l. The tests are important as the relationship between dosages and blood levels is currently unpredictable.

Until recently Vitamin D was seen as potentially toxic and of use only for bone health. We didn't recommend more than 400iu a day. The evidence now suggests that D3 is very safe at high levels. Professor Vieth, the expert on D3 toxicity, believes that 10,000iu a day should be seen as safe and normal. Toxicity doesn't kick in until a blood level of 220nmol/l is reached. Then Calcium may leach into your blood and urine. This is detectable by your GP and fully reversible. Vieth estimates that a loading dose of 60-90,000iu followed by 1,000iu daily is safe for adults, but only a blood test will properly inform.

Supplements of D3 are the way to go for most people. The D3 that you make from the sun is the best - it is free and more long lived - in Scotland we just can't make enough. It is also tied up with contradictory advice regarding sun and skin cancer. Dietary sources are a possibility but are pretty limited to oily fish, eggs, and fortified foods. 75g of wild oily fish can provide 500iu. It seems as if farmed fish, however, contains little or none. Mushrooms can produce D3 if exposed to the sun.

We are content to recommend a daily dose of 5,000iu. An initial regime of 50,000iu every week for 3 months would be best for people who have been tested as having less than 50nmol/l. If you have a particular health concern then we recommend that you go to your GP and explain why you would like a test and then work through it with them.

John, Diploma in Health Food Retailing