



# SwimTalk Summer 2006



## Vitamin D Deficiency By Anna Lea Roof

Vitamin D is known as the “sunshine vitamin.” The skin, when exposed to sunlight, manufactures copious quantities of Vitamin D. So how could an active swimmer develop a Vitamin D deficiency?

It seems unlikely, but it happened to me.

### Vitamin D Basics

Calcium is required to build and maintain strong bones. What many people do not know is that without an adequate supply of Vitamin D, the body cannot adequately absorb calcium. Without Vitamin D, bones can become thin, brittle, or misshapen. This condition in children is called rickets.

Vitamins are either fat-soluble or water-soluble. Vitamin C, for example, is a water-soluble vitamin. That means that it is not stored in the body; any unused excess is excreted by the body on a daily basis. Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin. That means that it is stored in the body and used as it is needed. It also means that if the body becomes deficient, it takes a long time (and a lot of Vitamin D), to get the levels back into the normal range. Vitamin D researchers are now finding that Vitamin D plays an important role in more than just bone health. Evidence suggests that Vitamin D may be protective against several types of cancers. Some Multiple Sclerosis researchers have hypothesized that low levels of Vitamin D may play a role in the development of MS.

The current recommended daily allowance (RDA) of Vitamin D for most adults is 400 IU (International Units) a day. But Vitamin D does not occur naturally in very many foods. Because rickets was a major health problem in the U.S. in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, a milk fortification program was begun. A glass of fortified milk contains about 100 IU of Vitamin D.

Leading Vitamin D researchers are convinced that the current RDA is much too low. Most of them now think that 1,000 IU to 4,000 IU per day may be required to maintain adequate Vitamin D levels in the body.

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### Upcoming Events

For more info go to <http://community.lawrence.com/movy/>

July 29, Saturday 8:00pm  
Ad Astra Long Course Meet  
Lenexa, KS

Aug. 19-20 Tulsa, OK  
Oklahoma State LCM Championship

Sunday, Aug. 20  
All Relay Meet - Roeland Park

Aug. 3-17 Stanford, CA  
FINA World Masters Championships  
—Over 7100 entries from 75 countries.  
This will be the largest masters meet held on U.S. soil. The Championship will also include 75 water polo teams (including 14 women’s teams).  
—22 MOVY swimmers are entered.

May—Sept. 15 Hosted by River City Sharks  
5K & 10K Postal Championships

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**Friday August 4**  
**Penguin Paddle for Arthritis**  
**Join the Prairie Life Masters in**  
**Overland Park**  
**11:45am—1:15pm**  
**50 X 100 , 75 or 50**  
**On 1:30**  
 \$25 Donation for the challenge set, lunch and prizes.  
[penguinpaddlekc.kintera.org](http://penguinpaddlekc.kintera.org)  
 Or contact Jen Gray  
 913-707-1974  
[jengray1010@hotmail.com](mailto:jengray1010@hotmail.com)

### The By-laws for MOVY

Swimming will be updated soon. When the updates are complete they will be posted on the website. If you would like a hard copy, contact Anthony Thompson.

A vote will be held at the Fall meeting to approve the changes. The date of the Fall meeting will be announced soon.

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 • **Breadbasket Zone Championships**  
 • April 29—30  
 • Approximately 60 swimmers from 6 states swam at the Zone Championships held in Omaha, Nebraska.  
 • For complete results, go to [www.omahamastersswim.com](http://www.omahamastersswim.com)  
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## Vitamin D (continued)

The human body can manufacture its own Vitamin D when the skin is exposed to sunlight. But a couple of conditions must be met. The exposure has to be midday sun (10am to 3pm), on unprotected skin (no sunscreen). And at our latitude, our skin can only manufacture Vitamin D from sunlight from May to September.

According to Dr. Michael Holick, MD, of the Boston University School of Medicine, about 10 minutes of midday sun exposure over a large portion of the body, several times a week, is all that is needed to maintain adequate Vitamin D levels. Dr. Holick's views have met with criticism, however, from dermatologists who argue against any unprotected sun exposure due to the risk of skin cancer. Dr. Holick does not advocate excess tanning; he recommends that sunscreen be applied after 10 minutes of unprotected exposure. He cautions that one should NEVER get enough sun exposure to burn.

### **The Deficiency**

So, back to me. In the summer, I swim outdoors. By the end of the summer I have tan lines that persist through much of the winter. How could I be deficient in Vitamin D? I think it's probably because of a combination of the factors mentioned earlier. I swim outdoors, but during the week it's late in the day (6:30pm). That's much too late to produce any Vitamin D from sunlight. On Saturdays, we swim from 10:30am to noon. But I always wear sunscreen for that workout; I would definitely get sunburned after 90 minutes of exposure. And even though I take a daily multivitamin that contains 400 IU of Vitamin D, and drink a couple of glasses of milk each day, in my case the researchers must be right. It obviously wasn't enough.

My doctor put me on prescription-levels of Vitamin D (50,000 IU a week) for five months. At the end of that time, my level was back into the normal range. I now take a maintenance dose of 2,000 IU a day.

### **The Results**

At the time of my diagnosis, I felt fine. I read all I could find on the Internet about Vitamin D deficiencies. I didn't find much about how it feels to be deficient in Vitamin D. Besides the possibility of low bone density, most of the descriptions mentioned only vague symptoms such as "muscle fatigue."

About four months after my diagnosis, I was at swim practice one night. Our coach, Derek, said, "OK, that's it. You're done." I looked at the clock in surprise. I still had a lot of energy left. It didn't feel like I'd just swum a 90-minute workout.

A few days later, the same thing happened. As I drove home from the pool I wondered why I felt so energetic. I hadn't altered my sleep schedule, eating habits, or anything like that. Finally I realized that I had been on the Vitamin D for four months. My levels were probably nearing normal.

As I thought back, I realized that I had been experiencing unusual fatigue in swim workouts for a long time - more than a year. It was easy to blame a variety of factors: not enough sleep, job stress, aging. I could remember workouts during the prior winter, wondering why I felt so tired while my 60-year-old lane mate (15 years my senior) seemed to be doing just fine.

### **Epilogue**

Today, a year later, I feel even better. My swimming stamina has continued to improve. My times haven't gotten any faster, but I guess I can't have everything!

### **References**

<http://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/vitamind.asp>

<http://www.vitamindcouncil.com/>

[http://www.mercola.com/2002/feb/23/vitamin\\_d\\_deficiency.htm](http://www.mercola.com/2002/feb/23/vitamin_d_deficiency.htm)

<http://www.uvadvantage.org/>



## Nationals in Coral Springs, Florida By Kelly Brown

I was fortunate to take part in the 2006 Masters Nationals SCY Championships in Coral Springs, Florida. A few months ago, I moved to Florida as a result of a job transfer; I registered for the National Championships because they were being held so close to my new residence. By the time the swim meet rolled around, I was seriously missing my swimming buddies from the KC Blazers Masters swim team. It was so great to see some of these familiar faces once again, especially in this new and unfamiliar environment that I am destined to call home.

As always, one of the most inspirational aspects of Masters swim meets are the incredible performances of the more senior athletes. Kudos to our five national champions: **Nan Bohl, Betty Christian, Marie Kreipe, Beth Eldgridge, and Fredd Hoppe**. Nan broke the 200 SCY breaststroke USMS national record, held by a well known masters swimmer, **June Krauser**, who was the USA national champion in 1943 in breaststroke. This nationals was one of our most successful, especially for MOVY women who finished 14th as a team (only 4 places from a national banner top ten team award).

One of my favorite parts of the large swim meets is meeting new people, both Masters swimmers and general spectators. This meet was no exception. Once again I was impressed by the friendliness and positive attitudes of these people. While watching the Men's 100 yard freestyle, I struck up a conversation with a non-swimming spectator. During our conversation, a 70 year old man named **Cav Cavanaugh** completed his heat, swimming the 100 yard freestyle in 57.89 seconds, a new national record for his age group. "THAT", the spectator exclaimed, "is absolutely insane"! Then, she looked all around her and continued, "this whole thing is crazy".

Indeed. It is crazy to imagine a 70 year old swimming a time in the 100 yard freestyle that would make many high school swimmers happy. It is crazy to see competitive athletes in their 70's, 80's, and 90's with physiques and an ease of movement typical of individuals several decades younger. Several times during the meet, I had a sense of being part of an alternate, parallel universe within which people are somehow protected from the usual course of aging, with its accompanying ravages. Maybe the legendary "Fountain of Youth" does exist, and we have found it right under our noses at the local swimming pool.

Scientists are just beginning to understand the effects of diet and exercise on the aging process. Masters athletes are playing a role in teaching these scientists, and society as a whole, the truth about the potential for athletic performance throughout the human life span. It is exciting to be a part of Masters swimming, and to be able to witness first-hand the incredible performances of my senior team mates and fellow Masters swimmers. In addition to being great swimmers, they are excellent company--- they are lively, engaging, and interesting people. Ultimately, my senior team mates are inspirational. They give me hope that I can also age well, live actively, and swim well into my senior years.

Kelly Brown  
4550 Lake Waterford Way, Apt. 8  
Melbourne, FL 32901  
[brown2@bellsouth.net](mailto:brown2@bellsouth.net)

### MOVY swimmers at Spring Nationals

**Nan Bohl** won three events and set a new USMS record in the 200 Breast (beating the time set by June Krauser, a former national champion from 1943). **Betty Christain, Beth Eldridge, Fred Hoppe** and **Marie Kreipe** also won events at the national championships. **Kelly Brown, Lisa Dyer, Laurie Reaburn, Bill Sherman, and Robert Wright** turned in good swims and scored points for MOVY.

### Missouri Valley Officers

#### Chairman:

Anthony Thompson  
913-262-2464  
[SwimTotoSwim@msn.com](mailto:SwimTotoSwim@msn.com)  
[MOVYchair@usms.org](mailto:MOVYchair@usms.org)

#### Registrar:

Anna Lea Roof  
913-642-5484  
[AnnaLea@usms.org](mailto:AnnaLea@usms.org)  
[MOVYregistrar@usms.org](mailto:MOVYregistrar@usms.org)

#### Treasurer:

Ellen Haden  
[EMHaden@aol.com](mailto:EMHaden@aol.com)  
[MOVYtreasurer@usms.org](mailto:MOVYtreasurer@usms.org)

#### Webmaster:

DanTwedt  
785-832-0858  
[MOVYwebmaster@usms.org](mailto:MOVYwebmaster@usms.org)

#### Sanctions & Officials:

Dulcy Sellon  
785-842-0771  
[MVSswim@sunflower.com](mailto:MVSswim@sunflower.com)  
[MOVYsanctions@usms.org](mailto:MOVYsanctions@usms.org)

#### Newsletter Editor:

Shari Harden  
816-229-3979  
[Kestrel277@comcast.net](mailto:Kestrel277@comcast.net)  
[MOVYeditor@usms.org](mailto:MOVYeditor@usms.org)

#### Records & Top Ten

Bill Sherman  
816-363-6215  
[BSherm81@kc.rr.com](mailto:BSherm81@kc.rr.com)  
[MOVYtop10@usms.org](mailto:MOVYtop10@usms.org)

MOVY Newsletter Editor  
Shari Harden  
513 NE Grant Dr.  
Blue Springs, MO 64014

## **Where to Swim???**

**Check out the MOVY website for places to swim.**

**<http://community.lawrence.com/movy/>**

Attention MOVY Swimmers  
Please send articles, meet  
information or anything of  
interest to  
kestrel277@comcast.net  
For the next edition of Swim-  
Talk.  
Thanks!!