

# Charlottesville Dermatology

April, 2010



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April Promotions

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April 28th, 2010

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**Call for an appointment**

Greetings friends!

Charlottesville Dermatology is pleased to announce that **Melissa Walker, Master Aesthetician** has joined our staff. Melissa moved to Charlottesville from South Carolina and brings with her six years of experience in Laser Technology and Skincare. Melissa is certified in Laser Hair Removal, Fraxel, Vitalize Peels and Obagi. She has also attended advanced IPL training. We are thrilled with the positive feedback we have already received from patients. We invite you to call for a complimentary consultation with Melissa or please review our specials for April in the right column and call to schedule an appointment.  
(434) 984-2400

### Shedding Some Light on the Sunshine Vitamin

by Chelsi Miller, NP

Vitamin D has recently received a lot of attention, both in the medical community and by the mainstream media. Unfortunately some of the messages about vitamin D are often contradicting and confusing. I would like to take this opportunity to share some facts about vitamin D and hopefully provide some clarity on this important topic.

#### ***What is vitamin D?***

Vitamin D is a fat soluble vitamin that can be found in eggs, fatty fish, fortified foods and supplements. It is naturally produced when ultraviolet B rays (UVB) are absorbed by the skin and converted to a usable form of vitamin D by the liver and kidneys. Because of this, vitamin D is known as the sunshine vitamin. The length of time that it takes for the body to absorb peak levels of UVB that can be converted into vitamin D is heavily influenced by the time of year, time of day, geographic location, cloud coverage, pollution and a person's skin type. Once peak levels have been met (which takes 5-30 minutes in ideal conditions), additional sunlight is no longer converted to vitamin D, but UV damage to the skin continues

#### ***Why is it important?***

Vitamin D promotes calcium absorption and helps to maintain adequate concentrations of calcium and phosphate in the blood. It also reduces inflammation and promotes neuromuscular and immune health. Insufficient levels of vitamin D (less than 15ng/ml) have been associated with several diseases and conditions including osteoporosis, colon cancer, prostate cancer, breast cancer,

hypertension, glucose intolerance, type I diabetes and multiple sclerosis.

**How do I know if I am deficient?**

It is estimated that 36-57% of Americans have insufficient levels of vitamin D. A simple blood test measuring 25-hydroxy vitamin D is the best indicator of vitamin D status. This can be done by your primary care doctor.

**Is sunlight a good source of vitamin D?**

As with anything in medicine, the benefit of any treatment needs to outweigh the associated risks. In the case of unprotected sun exposure, the risk far exceeds the benefit when other means to get adequate doses of vitamin D are readily available. The same wavelength of light that promotes vitamin D synthesis also causes photo aging (premature wrinkling, pigment changes, sunspots, etc.) and is a carcinogen leading to skin cancers. Unprotected sun exposure is the leading preventable cause of skin cancer. It is responsible for most of the 1.5 million skin cancers and 8,000 deaths due to metastatic melanoma in the United States annually.

**What is the safest way to get enough vitamin D?**

It is difficult to get enough vitamin D from diet alone. A more consistent way to insure adequate levels is through daily supplements. Vitamin D supplements are generally well tolerated at doses less than 2,000 IU daily.

**Where can I get more information?**

**National Institute of Health:**

[http://dietarysupplements.info.nih.gov/factsheets/vitamin\\_d.asp](http://dietarysupplements.info.nih.gov/factsheets/vitamin_d.asp)

**American Academy of Dermatology:**

<http://www.aad.org/forms/policies/uploads/ps/ps-vitamin20d.pdf>

**American Cancer Society:**

[http://www.cancer.org/docroot/NWS/content/NWS\\_1\\_1x\\_Can\\_Vitam\\_in\\_D\\_Prevent\\_Cancer.asp](http://www.cancer.org/docroot/NWS/content/NWS_1_1x_Can_Vitam_in_D_Prevent_Cancer.asp)

**Skin Cancer Foundation:**

<http://www.skincancer.org/the-d-dilemma.html>

See Our Website for Detailed information

[www.charlottesvilledermatology.com](http://www.charlottesvilledermatology.com)

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