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Vitamin D Deficiency Increases Risk of Heart Attack, Stroke

Recent vitamin D research has found vitamin D receptors in heart muscle and many other tissues. This may partly explain the results of the Framingham Offspring Study, in which researchers analyzed vitamin D status (serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D [25-(OH)D]) in 1,739 individuals without cardiovascular disease to determine how levels might correspond with the incidence of cardiac events (MI, stroke). Baseline levels were assessed and participants were followed for a mean of 5.4 years. Researchers observed the incidence of cardiovascular disease and found it was correlated positively with serum 25-(OH)D status. Individuals who were seriously deficient (25-(OH)D < 10 ng/mL) had an 80% greater risk of having a cardiovascular incident, while deficient individuals with 25-(OH)D between 10-15 ng/mL had a 53% increased risk, compared to those with 25-(OH)D > 15 ng/mL. A serum 25-(OH)D level less than 30 ng/mL is considered deficient by most vitamin D experts. The authors concluded vitamin D deficiency is positively correlated with incident cardiovascular disease.

Wang TJ, Pencina MJ, Booth SI, et al. Vitamin D deficiency and risk of cardiovascular disease. *Circulation* 2008;117:503-511