



nutrition

by Virginia Harry

Don't let the sun go down on you this winter!

I don't know about you, but I dread the winter. I must have been a squirrel or a groundhog in a previous existence, because as soon as the clocks change, all I want to do is curl up under the duvet and have someone wake me with a nice cuppa and a digestive biscuit around April. Sadly, my mortgage contract doesn't have a hibernation clause, and my mortgage payments don't allow me to spend 6 months of the year on holiday in more temperate climes. So I have to rely on my 'sunshine in a bottle' – vitamin D.

...as many as a quarter of Britons are vitamin D deficient in the winter...

Food sources of vitamin D

Unfortunately, vitamin D is present in very few foods. You can find it in prawns and good old oily fish (all that Omega 3 to keep your skin supple and your joints lubricated throughout the winter!) – sardines, mackerel, salmon, and eggs. Some milk and cereal products are fortified with it, too. But that's probably not enough.

Supplementation

Nutritionists agree that, to get a significant therapeutic effect from vitamin D, doses of at least 10,000iu are appropriate. After all, the body can absorb around 20,000iu from the sun per day. There are two forms of vitamin D – D2 (ergocalciferol) and D3 (cholecalciferol), with the former being derived from yeast and therefore suitable for vegans, and the latter from animal sources. I take my vitamin D in liquid form, but you can take tablets if you prefer. Because it's fat soluble, you're likely to absorb more of it when you take it with your biggest meal of the day.

Finally... can too much be toxic? There's no evidence to suggest that moderate doses of vitamin D are toxic unless you've been taking around 40,000iu per day for a long time. So don't! Take a high quality brand of D3 in doses between 10,000 – 20,000iu per day. This way you can generate your own internal sun lamp this season. 

Virginia Harry is a nutritional therapist with a practice in the South East. She also provides nutritional education in the workplace. Visit www.nutriteach.co.uk or email vharry@nutriteach.co.uk

As it's produced by the action of the sun's rays on the skin, it stands to reason that less sun = less Vitamin D. This would perhaps explain why as many as a quarter of Britons are vitamin D deficient in the winter. Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is just one of many health issues that has been found to respond well to vitamin D supplementation. One study found that after just 5 days of supplementation at 400 or 800iu per day, winter mood improved. Further research showed that SAD sufferers responded more positively to a single dose of 100,000iu of vitamin D than those treated with light therapy.

D for diversity

If you do suffer from winter depression, do consider having your vitamin D blood levels assessed. Ideally, levels of this should be above 35 nanograms per ml (87 nanomoles per litre).

As well as giving you 'sunshine on a cloudy day', vitamin D plays a fundamental role in calcium absorption. Together these nutrients help protect older adults from osteoporosis. Vitamin D has also been found to play a major role in breast and bowel cancer treatment, regulating and controlling the growth and spread of malignant cells. It can help with other conditions as diverse as diabetes, heart disease, joint disease, MS, dementia, birth difficulties and autism. And it even protects us from flu by dampening down the immune system! It's particularly helpful in winter, when there are more viral infections around.

So you need it. If you're an indoor person, or are – rightfully – wary of too much sun exposure, or it's winter, how do you get enough?

Flo & Us
Suppliers Of Natural Handmade Soaps
Holistic Massage, Reflexology, Reiki,
NLP & Aromatherapy Massage Available

8 fore st. Sidmouth www.floandus.co.uk

telephone
01395 - 516053

HAWKWOOD College

COURSES & Autumn ReTREATS!
Inspirational days & weekends
Runes * Happiness * Intuitive Music
Healing the Male Heart * Earth Energies
Forgiveness * New Year Retreat
at our lovely centre in the Cotswolds!

01453 759034 www.hawkwoodcollege.co.uk

Soil Association Organic Farm School
Looking for something different to do this year?
Try your hand at:

- Keeping bees •
- Making cheese •
- Foraging for wild food •
- Or brewing your own cider •

Organic Farm School offers practical courses in growing food, rearing animals, cooking and rural crafts, learning directly from organic farmers and expert practitioners.

Discover for yourself the precious knowledge that our grandparents took for granted.

For more information of courses, venues and dates, visit www.soilassociation.org/farmschool.aspx

Lita de Alberdi
Spiritual development with a teacher you can trust

Classes in: Ascension, Channelling, Awakening your Light Bodyand much more, plus guided meditations on CD

For a free information pack please contact: School of the Living Light
Millslade Hall, Station Rd, Ashcott, Somerset. TA7 9QP
01458 211047

www.schoolofthelivinglight.co.uk
Established 1993

bali spirit festival
Ubud, Bali • Mar 23 - 27, 2011
an annual celebration of yoga · dance · music

www.balispiritfestival.com

LIVING HARMONY CENTRE SLOVENIA
Spiritual Retreats, Workshops, Seminars, Conferences
Residential Centre Hire

Experience the beautiful and inspiring Living Harmony Centre, specially designed and harmonised according to Feng Shui and Living Harmony principles to help people reconnect with nature and honour their true self. Log onto our website for details of upcoming workshops, or contact us for hire details.

!!! Book now for !!!
The Gentle Art of Blessing
1-2-3 April 2011
workshop with **Pierre Pradervand**

Change your life and the life of others forever by learning this gentle yet powerful process, using blessing as a tool for healing. Experience its inspiring and eminent author, **Pierre Pradervand**, and be prepared to both laugh and be moved to tears by him.

Workshop: £180 incl. Friday evening talk
Centre D,B+B: £130 for 3 nights (limited numbers)
Flights and transfers extra.
Delicious vegetarian food!

www.livingharmony.co.uk
info@livingharmony.co.uk
00 44 (0)20 8958 1740