

## Research Roundup

### Do you really need 10,000 steps a day?

Since the introduction of the Fitbit® in 2014, people have been counting steps with a daily goal of at least 10,000. But, is that realistic, sustainable or based on research? Also, are more steps better?

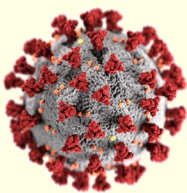


In a prospective cohort study reported in *JAMA Internal Medicine*, researchers studied 18,289 U.S. participants with a mean age of 72 from the Women’s Health Study who wore an accelerometer during waking hours for seven days. Data was successfully downloaded from 17,466 devices of which 16,741 were found to be worn as instructed, at least seven waking hours per day and more than four days. From this researchers not only measured steps per day, but also stepping intensity (i.e., peak one-minute cadence; peak 30-minute cadence, maximum five-minute cadence, time spent at a stepping rate of more than 40 steps per minute and purposeful steps.)

Their conclusions were that for older women as few as 4,400 steps per day made a significant difference in lowering mortality rates. They also noted that walking more steps progressively decreased mortality rates leveling off at approximately 7,500 steps per day—not the 10,000 generally associated with walking benchmarks. Also, they found stepping intensity was not clearly related to lowering mortality rates after accounting for total steps per day.

### Ongoing Vitamin D research studying effectiveness against viruses

With the arrival of fall and winter, daylight hours are fewer which can affect the amount of Vitamin D you naturally get from sunlight. Fortunately, it is readily available in foods such as dairy, fatty fish, egg yolks and fortified juices and breakfast cereals. Yet, research shows many people don’t get the recommended dietary allowance (RDA) of 600 IU for those age one to 70, and 800 IU for adults older than 70 which is the reason physicians regularly check levels and prescribe multivitamins and calcium supplements.



Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin that helps calcium absorption and bone mineralization, both necessary for building strong bones, as well as cell growth, immune function and fighting inflammation. It also is the reason researchers are studying the relationship between Vitamin D and virus suppression, including COVID-19. But before you rush out and stock up on Vitamin D, researchers and physicians warn there has not been sufficient evidence to support this claim or correlation. More important, Vitamin D can be toxic in amounts greater than the recommended RDA. Therefore, before adding a vitamin or supplement to your diet, check with your physician to determine if a supplement is right for you, and if so, take only what is recommended.