



# Research Summary: Vitamin D #1

As featured in Dr. Kenny Mittelstadt's video:  
"Vitamin D and Cancer: The Link Most Doctors Don't Explain"  
Date of Publication: 03/28/2026

## Research Context:

This week's topic explores how vitamin D isn't just about bone health or a simple supplement you take during the winter. It's part of a much larger conversation around immune signaling, inflammation, and how the body responds to abnormal cell growth over time. When you look more closely at both clinical patterns and research, vitamin D begins to show up as a recurring signal across cancer outcomes. Not as a single cause, but as part of a broader physiological pattern that reflects how different systems in the body are communicating. This helps explain why focusing only on symptoms or standard lab ranges may miss deeper insights about what's actually driving health changes beneath the surface. When viewed through a functional medicine lens, vitamin D becomes less about deficiency alone and more about how well the body is regulating immune balance, inflammation, and cellular repair over time.

## Key Findings from the Research:

### Study 1 (PMID 37004841):

A large meta-analysis of randomized trials involving over 100,000 participants examined how vitamin D supplementation influences cancer outcomes. Researchers found that vitamin D did not significantly reduce how often cancer developed across these populations. However, when they looked more closely at cancer mortality, a different pattern appeared. Daily vitamin D supplementation was associated with about a 6% reduction in cancer deaths, with stronger effects seen in studies using consistent daily dosing rather than large, infrequent doses. In plain language, vitamin D may not act as a primary prevention tool, but it may influence how the body responds once cancer is present. This suggests vitamin D could be affecting the biological environment surrounding cancer, rather than acting as a simple protective barrier.

### Study 2 (PMID 35352965):

Another meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials evaluated the relationship between vitamin D supplementation and both cancer incidence and mortality. Researchers again found no significant reduction in how often cancer developed among participants taking vitamin D. However, they observed about a 10% reduction in cancer mortality in those supplementing with vitamin D compared to control groups. This reinforces a consistent pattern across different study populations. Vitamin D does not appear to prevent cancer from forming in a direct way, but it may influence how the body manages disease progression. In practical terms, this suggests vitamin D may play a role in shaping immune responses, inflammation levels, and overall resilience during illness rather than acting as a single-solution intervention.

### Study 3 (National Cancer Institute):

Observational data summarized by the National Cancer Institute highlights a consistent pattern between vitamin D levels and cancer outcomes. Individuals with lower vitamin D levels tend to have higher cancer mortality compared to those with higher levels across multiple studies and populations. While observational research cannot prove cause and effect, it does reveal meaningful trends that are worth paying attention to. In this case, vitamin D status may reflect how well the body is regulating immune function and inflammation. In everyday terms, lower vitamin D levels often show up alongside broader patterns of physiological stress or imbalance.



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## Functional Medicine Connections:

Here's how these pieces fit together:

Vitamin D acts more like a hormone signal than a basic nutrient. It helps coordinate communication across your immune system, inflammatory pathways, and cellular repair processes.

When vitamin D signaling is working well, immune cells are better able to recognize and respond to abnormal cells. When signaling is weaker, that communication can become less efficient, which may influence how the body manages inflammation and cellular stress over time.

This is why vitamin D often shows up alongside patterns like chronic inflammation, metabolic imbalance, or immune dysregulation. It's not acting alone. It's part of a larger communication network inside the body.

From a root-cause perspective, vitamin D becomes less about "fixing" one condition and more about understanding how different systems are interacting under the surface.

## Practical Reflections & Takeaways:

Take a moment to think about your own patterns. Have you ever had your vitamin D levels checked during times of fatigue, low mood, or ongoing inflammation? And if you have been told your labs are "normal," does that fully explain how you feel on a day-to-day basis?

Sometimes these patterns are not random. They are signals that your body is trying to communicate about how different systems are functioning together beneath the surface. As you reflect on your own health, consider whether there may be underlying patterns that have not yet been explored, especially when symptoms persist despite doing many of the "right" things.

Those patterns may be pointing toward deeper connections that are worth understanding.

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## References:

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