

File under: UV-Vitamin D and optimal health

In this review study Dr Oliver Gillie criticizes the UK cancer association (Cancer Research UK) on the advice to the public. He calls a "Sunlight robbery". It seems that after many years of pressure by mainly Dr Gillie, CRUK is now revising its advise to the British public.

Sunlight robbery: A critique of public health policy on vitamin D in the UK

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The British Isles have a very cloudy climate and as a result receive fewer hours of clear sunlight than most other industrial regions.

The majority of people in these islands have low blood levels of vitamin D [25(OH)D] all year round.

Few food products are fortified with vitamin D in the UK and the government does not recommend any vitamin D supplement for most adults in the UK.

Diseases associated with vitamin D insufficiency such as cancer, heart disease, diabetes (types 1 and 2) and multiple sclerosis are more frequent in the UK, and particularly in Scotland, than in many other European countries and some, such as multiple sclerosis and diabetes (types 1 and 2), are increasing in incidence.

Present knowledge suggests that the risk of some chronic diseases could be reduced if vitamin D intake or sun exposure of the population were increased.

Yet policy and public health recommendations of the UK government and its agencies (e.g. the Health Protection Agency, the Food Standards Agency) and of Cancer Research UK have failed to take full account of established and putative benefits of vitamin D and/or sunshine.

The epidemic of chronic disease in the UK, which is associated with and caused at least in part by vitamin D insufficiency, has not been adequately recognized by these agencies, and too often measures taken by them have been misguided, inappropriate or ineffective.