

Vitamin D - Beyond Bone

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The role of vitamin D in human health continues to attract much attention, both from academic research and the public media. This is due, in part to continued concern about the prevalence of vitamin D-deficiency in countries such as the UK and the impact this may have on skeletal health, notably in children. However, in recent years vitamin D has also been linked to a wide range of extra-skeletal functions, suggesting that vitamin D-deficiency has a much broader impact on human health. Although much of this new perspective on vitamin D and human health stems from disease association studies, it is also important to recognise the important basic vitamin D biology research that supports a wider role for vitamin D in human physiology. The review presentation will highlight key developments in extra-skeletal vitamin function, notably immune regulation and placental and fetal development that have attracted recent attention. The overall aim of the talk will be to highlight key areas of vitamin D function that are likely to provide meaningful targets for future research and vitamin D supplementation studies.