

Healthcare & Wellness :

Fortis Ft. Lt. Rajan Dhall Hospital, New Delhi :

Khaleejtimes.com, May 07, 2014 :

Sunlight can help control symptoms of severe asthma

“Asthma patients have very low immunity and deficiency of Vitamin D, so exposure to sunlight helps building their immunity,” **Vivek Nangia, director and head, pulmonary, Fortis hospital, told IANS.**

Exposure to sunlight provides Vitamin D which can help control symptoms of severe asthma as people affected with asthma are low on immunity, say experts.

“Asthma patients have very low immunity and deficiency of Vitamin D, so exposure to sunlight helps building their immunity,” Vivek Nangia, director and head, pulmonary, Fortis hospital, told IANS.

Asthma is caused by inflammation of the air passages in the lungs. Vitamin D helps in reducing the inflammation.

A new study by a team of scientists at King’s College London also revealed the fact that Vitamin D, which is made by the body in sunlight, calms an “overactive” part of the immune system in asthma.

Adding to the study, the experts here pointed out that the new study examines the role of molecules that cause this malfunctioning of the immune response.

“The research examined whether Vitamin D had an effect on the levels of the molecule produced by white blood cells in a laboratory experiment. It was found that Vitamin D reduced the levels of the specific harming molecules produced by cells from people with asthma,” Neeraj Gupta, senior consultant pulmonology Paras Hospitals, Gurgaon told IANS.

Gupta said, “Patients treated for asthma are on inhaled corticosteroids - ICS. The ICS have side effects - they reduce the levels of Vitamin D in the body, hence all doctors treating asthma give vitamin D supplements to the patients.”

As the study is under clinical trial, once completed the experts are hopeful that the sunshine vitamin will work for treating asthma which has been on the rise in the country.

“With pollution levels continuing to rise there has been a 20 to 30 per cent rise in asthma cases in our country,” said Nangia.

Kailash Nath, consultant pulmonology, Columbia Asia Hospital, said that pollution has no direct link to asthma but the pollutants present in the air like diesel fumes and suspended particulate matter have led to increase in symptoms of asthma.