

Long-Term Care Survey Alert

Nutrition: Shore Up Vitamin and Mineral Supplementation Practices

Check out this medication safety tip.

Certain vitamin and mineral supplements can help rein in negative outcomes in some cases, according to **John Morley, MD**, a geriatrics and nutrition expert.

For example, people's "vitamin D [levels] go down with aging," said Morley in a presentation on OTC supplementation and medical foods at the March 2011 American Medical Directors Association annual meeting. And "if you can find one person in your nursing home who is not 'vitamin D deficient,' certainly if you use 30 ng [per ml as a cutoff] -- that is a miracle." He also noted that "vitamin D deficiency is related to hip fracture and sarcopenia."

Remedy: "Someone can go in the sun one half hour day without sunblock and get enough vitamin D3 -- or you can supplement," says Morley, director of the division of geriatric medicine at St. Louis University School of Medicine in St. Louis, Mo. "We give everyone 1,000 units a day. Studies show that somewhere between 400 units and 650 actually works. And there's no such thing as a 650 unit dose, so you can give 800" units instead, Morley tells Eli.