

**STOP.****RESTORE.****END.**

WHAT CAN WE LEARN ABOUT THE ROLL OF EXPOSURE TO SUNLIGHT? AND THE RISK OF DEVELOPING MS?



RESEARCHERS AT THREE SITES AROUND THE COUNTRY ARE EXPLORING HOW EXPOSURE TO SUNLIGHT MAY IMPACT A PERSON'S RISK FOR DEVELOPING MS.

BACKGROUND

Multiple sclerosis is more common in populations distant from the equator, where sunlight is weaker. A component of sunlight, ultraviolet B (UVB), facilitates the production of vitamin D in the skin. There is some evidence that vitamin D has a protective effect that lowers the chance of developing MS, and studies are exploring whether vitamin D supplements can reduce the severity of symptoms in people who have MS.

THE STUDY

Harvey Checkoway, MPH, PhD, of the University of Washington in Seattle, with colleagues from the University of Minnesota and the National Cancer Institute, is gathering information from responses to questionnaires provided by a group of over 60,000 radiologic technologists. The study is comparing UVB exposures and throughout life between an estimated 350 MS cases and approximately 700 participants without MS identified from the population of radiologic technologists. The team is comparing their histories of residential locations at various ages with measurements of ultraviolet light measured by NASA's Total Ozone Mapping Spectrometer satellites. They will then compare UVB exposures of the MS cases and with those of participants without MS. The researchers are also collecting information about several other factors that might influence MS development, such as smoking and obesity.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The results of this research could shed light on the relation between vitamin D levels and the development of MS, which would add to evidence needed to find a way to prevent the disease.

**WE ARE A DRIVING FORCE OF MS RESEARCH AND TREATMENT TO
STOP DISEASE PROGRESSION, RESTORE FUNCTION AND END MS FOREVER.**